SOLITUDE;

WRITTEN ORIGINALLY BY

J. G. ZIMMERMAN.

To which are added,

NOTES HISTORICAL AND EXPLANATORY;
A COPIOUS INDEX;
AND
FOUR BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVINGS
BY RIDLEY.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
Printed by T. Maiden, Sherbourne-Lane,
FOR VERNOR AND HOOD, J. CUTHELL, J. WALKER,
LACKINGTON, ALLEN, AND CO. J. NUNN,
OGILVY & SON, DARTON & HARVEY,
W. OTRIDGE AND SON, R. LEA,
AND J. SCATCHERD.

1799.

659/2

BRITISH MUSEUM

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SOLITUDE;

OR,

The pernicious Influence

OF

A total Seclusion from Society

UPON

The Mind and the Heart.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

INTRODUCTION.

SOLITUDE, in its strict and literal acceptation, is equally unfriendly to the happiness and foreign to the nature of mankind. An inclination to exercise the faculty of speech,* to interchange the sentiments of the mind, to indulge

* ARISTOTLE says, that as Nature does nothing in vain, and as man is the only animal whom she hath endued with the privilege of speech, he must have been formed for social delights: an opinion which the celebrated PUFFENDORFF, has, in common with all writers upon natural law, adopted. "That man," says he, "was designed by nature for a life of society, this "alone might be a sufficient argument, that he only, of all "living creatures, is endued with the power of expressing his "mind to others by articulate sounds; a faculty which, ab-"stracting from the social condition, we cannot conceive to be "of any use or advantage to mankind."

the affections of the heart, and to receive themſelves, while they beſtow on others, a kind aſſiſtance and ſupport, drives men, by an ever active, and almoſt irreſiſtible impulſe, from SOLITUDE to SOCIETY; and teaches them that the higheſt temporal felicity they are capable of enjoying, muſt be ſought for in a ſuitable union of the ſexes, and in a friendly intercourſe with their fellow-creatures. * The profoundeſt deductions of reaſon, the higheſt flights of fancy, the fineſt ſenſibilities of the heart, the happieſt diſcoveries

* "Man," ſays a profound philoſopher, "is an animal extremely deſirous of his own preſervation; of himſelf expoſed to many wants, unable to ſecure his own ſafety and maintenance without the aſſiſtance of his fellows, and capable of returning the kindneſs by the furtherance of mutual good. But then he is often malicious, inſolent, eaſily provoked, and as powerful in effecting miſchief as he is ready in deſigning it. Now that ſuch a creature may be preſerved and ſupported, and may enjoy the good things attending his condition of life, it is neceſſary that he ſhould be *ſocial*; that is, that he ſhould unite himſelf to thoſe of his own ſpecies, and in ſuch a manner regulate his behaviour towards them, as they may have no fair reaſon to do him harm; but rather incline to promote his intereſts, and to ſecure his rights and concerns. It ſeems, therefore, to be a fundamental law of nature, that *every man ought, as far as in him lies, to promote and preſerve a peaceful ſociableneſs with others, agreeable to the main end and diſpoſition of the human race:* that is, ſuch a diſpoſition of one man towards all others, as ſhall unite him to them by benevolence, by peace, by charity, and, as it were, by a ſilent and ſecret obligation."

diſcoveries of ſcience, and the moſt valuable productions of art, are feebly felt, and imperfectly enjoyed, in the cold and cheerleſs region of Solitude. It is not to the ſenſeleſs rock, or to the paſſing gale, that we can ſatisfactorily communicate our pleaſures and our pains. * The heavy ſighs which inceſſantly tranſpire from the vacant boſoms of the ſolitary hermit, and the ſurly miſanthropiſt, indicate the abſence of thoſe high delights which ever accompany congenial ſentiment and mutual affection. † The ſoul ſinks under a ſituation in which there are no kindred boſoms to participate its joys, and ſympathize in its ſorrows; and feels, ſtrongly feels, that the beneficent Creator has ſo framed and moulded the temper of our minds, that SOCIETY is the earlieſt

* CICERO, reaſoning upon the principles of *the Stoics*, inſiſts that "no man would chooſe to live in abſolute Solitude, although he might enjoy an infinity of pleaſures."

† "He who, diſguſted, quits the ſocial ſcene,
"And trees and beaſts prefer to courts and men,
"In the remoteſt glen, or lonelieſt grot,
"Still meets the ſpectre of diſtemper'd thought.
"His mind as dreary as the pathleſs woods;
"His breaſt as turb'lent as deſcending floods;
"His heart with ſtrong and raging paſſions torn;
"No ſweet companion near, with whom to mourn:
"The echoing rocks return his fruitleſs ſighs,
"And from himſelf th' unhappy HERMIT flies.

lieſt impulſe and the moſt powerful inclination of our hearts.

" Unhappy he! who from the firſt of joys,
" Society, cut off, is left alone
" Amid this world of death ——"

Society, however, although it is thus pointed out to us, as it were, by the finger of the Almighty, as the means of reaching our higheſt poſſible ſtate of earthly felicity, is ſo pregnant with dangers, that it depends entirely on ourſelves, whether the indulgence of this inſtinctive propenſity ſhall be productive of happineſs or miſery.

" —————— all have cauſe to ſmile,
" But ſuch as to themſelves that cauſe deny.
" Our faults are at the bottom of our pains;
" Error, in acts or judgment, is the ſource
" Of endleſs ſorrow ——————"

The pleaſures of Society, like pleaſures of every other kind, muſt, to be pure and permanent, be temperate and diſcreet. While paſſion animates, and ſenſibility cheriſhes, reaſon muſt direct, and virtue be the object of our courſe. Thoſe who ſearch for happineſs in a vague, deſultory, and indiſcriminate intercourſe with the world; who imagine the palace of Pleaſure

ſure to be ſurrounded by the gay, unthinking, and volatile part of the ſpecies; who conceive that the rays of all human delight beam from places of public feſtivity and reſort;

" Who all their joys in mean profuſion waſte
" Without reflection, management, or taſte;
" Careleſs of all that VIRTUE gives to pleaſe;
" For thought too active, and too mad for eaſe;
" Who give each appetite too looſe a rein,
" Puſh all enjoyment to the verge of pain;
" Impetuous follow where THE PASSIONS call,
" And live in rapture, or not live at all;

will, inſtead of laſting and ſatisfactory fruition, meet only with ſorrowful diſappointment. This mode of ſeeking ſociety is not a rational indulgence of that natural paſſion which heaven, in its benevolence to man, has planted in the human heart; but merely a factitious deſire, an habitual pruriency, produced by reſtleſs leiſure, and encouraged by vanity and diſſipation. SOCIAL HAPPINESS, true and eſſential ſocial happineſs, reſides only in the boſom of LOVE and in the arms of FRIENDSHIP; and can only be really enjoyed by congenial hearts, and kindred minds, in the domeſtic bowers of privacy and retirement. Affectionate intercourſe produces an inexhauſtible fund of delight. It is the perennial ſunſhine of the mind. With what extreme anxiety do we

all endeavour to find an amiable being, with whom we may form a tender tie and cloſe attachment, who may inſpire us with unfading bliſs, and receive increaſe of happineſs from our endearments and attention! How greatly do ſuch connections increaſe the kind and benevolent diſpoſitions of the heart! and how greatly do ſuch diſpoſitions, while they lead the mind to the enjoyment of domeſtic happineſs, awaken all the virtues, and call forth the beſt and ſtrongeſt energies of the ſoul! Deprived of the chaſte and endearing ſympathies of LOVE and FRIENDSHIP, the ſpecies ſink into groſs ſenſuality or mute indifference, neglect the improvement of their faculties, and renounce all anxiety to pleaſe; but incited by theſe propenſities, the ſexes mutually exert their powers, cultivate their talents, call every intellectual energy into action; and, by endeavouring to promote each other's happineſs, mutually ſecure their own.

" As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flowers,
" So man from FRIENDSHIP wiſdom and delight;
" Twins tied by Nature; if they part, they die.
" Haſt thou no friend to ſet thy mind abroach?
" Good ſenſe will ſtagnate: thoughts ſhut up, want air,
" And ſpoil, like bales unopen'd to the ſun.
" Had thought been all, ſweet *ſpeech* had been denied:

" It

" It ventilates our intellectual fires,
" And burnishes the mental magazine;
" Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.
" 'Tis converse qualifies for SOLITUDE,
" As exercise for salutary rest.
" Nature, in zeal for human amity,
" Denies or damps all *undivided* joy.
" Joy flies monopolists; it calls for *two*.
" Rich fruit! heav'n-planted; never pluck'd by *one*.
" Needful auxiliaries are our *friends*, to give
" To SOCIAL MAN true relish of himself.

Adverse circumstances, however, frequently prevent well-disposed characters not only from making the election which their hearts would prompt, and their understandings approve, but force them into alliances which both reason and sensibility reject. It is from the disappointments of love or of ambition that the sexes are generally repelled from Society to Solitude. The affection, the tenderness, the sensibility of the heart, are but too often torn and outraged by the cruelty and malevolence of an unfeeling world, in which Vice bears on its audacious front the mask of Virtue, and betrays INNOCENCE into the snares of unsuspected GUILT. The victims, however, whether of LOVE or of AMBITION, who retire from Society to recruit their depressed spirits, and repair their disordered minds, cannot, without injustice, be stigmatized as misanthropists, or

arraigned as anti-ſocial characters. All reliſh for ſcenes of ſocial happineſs may be loſt by an extreme and over-ardent paſſion for the enjoyments of them; but it is only thoſe who ſeek retirement from an averſion to the company of their fellow creatures, that can be ſaid to have renounced, or be deſtitute of, the common ſympathies of nature.

The preſent age, however, is not likely to produce many ſuch unnatural characters; for the manners of the whole world, and particularly of Europe, were never, perhaps, more diſpoſed to company. The rage for public entertainments ſeems to have infected all the claſſes of ſociety. The pleaſures of private life ſeem to be held in univerſal deteſtation and contempt; opprobrious epithets defame the humble enjoyments of domeſtic love; and thoſe whoſe hours are not conſumed in unmeaning viſits, or unſocial parties, are regarded as cenſors of the common conduct of the world, or as enemies to their fellow creatures: But, although mankind appear ſo extremely ſocial, they certainly were never leſs friendly and affectionate. Neither rank, nor ſex, nor age, is free from this pernicious habit. Infants, before they can well liſp the rudiments of ſpeech, are initiated into the idle ceremonies and parade of company; and can ſcarcely meet their parents

parents or their playmates without being obliged to perform a punctilious ſalutation. Formal card-parties, and petty treats, engroſs the time that ſhould be devoted to healthful exerciſe and manly recreation. The manners of the metropolis are imitated with inferior ſplendor, but with greater abſurdity, in the country: every village has its routs and its aſſemblies, in which the curled darlings of the place blaze forth in feathered luſtre and aukward magnificence; and while the charming ſimplicity of one ſex is deſtroyed by affectation, the honeſt virtues of the other by diſſolute gallantry, and the paſſions of both inflamed by vicious and indecent mirth, the grave elders of the diſtricts are trying their tempers and impoveriſhing their purſes at ſix-penny whiſt and caſſino.

" ——————————— all deem
" One moment unamus'd a miſery
" Not made for feeble man; all call aloud
" For every bauble drivel'd o'er by ſenſe,
" For rattles and conceits of every caſt,
" For change of follies, and relays of joys,
" To drag them through the tedious length
" Of a ſhort winter's day."

The ſpirit of diſſipation has reached even the vagrant tribe. The Gypſies of Germany ſuſpend their predatory excurſions, and on one previouſly appointed evening in every week, aſſemble to

enjoy their guilty ſpoils in the fumes of ſtrong waters and tobacco. The place of rendezvous is generally the vicinity of a mill, the proprietor of which, by affording to theſe wandering tribes an undiſturbed aſylum, not only ſecures his property from their depredations, but, by the idle tales with which they contrive to amuſe his ear, reſpecting the characters and conduct of his neighbours, furniſhes himſelf with new ſubjects of converſation for his next evening's coterie.

Minds that derive all their pleaſures from the levity and mirth of promiſcuous company, are ſeldom able to contribute, in any high degree, to their own amuſement. Characters like theſe ſearch every place for entertainment, except their own boſoms, and the boſoms of their ſurrounding families, where, by proper cultivation, real happineſs, the happineſs ariſing from LOVE and FRIENDSHIP, is alone capable of being found.

From LOVE and FRIENDSHIP, flowers of heav'nly ſeed,
The wiſe extract earth's moſt hyblean bliſs,
Superior wiſdom, crown'd with ſmiling joy.
But for whom bloſſoms theſe Elyſian flowers?
ABROAD they find who cheriſh them at HOME.
Of all the follies which o'erwhelm THE GREAT,
None clings more cloſely than the fancy fond,
That SACRED FRIENDSHIP is their eaſy prey,
Caught by the wafture of a golden lure,

Or

Or faſcination of a high-born ſmile.
Oh! ſad miſtake! Ye powers of wealth,
Can GOLD buy FRIENDSHIP? Impudence of hope!
LOVE, and LOVE only, is the loan of LOVE.
Repreſs ſuch wordly thoughts; nor hope to find
A FRIEND, but what has found A FRIEND in thee.
All like the purchaſe; few the price will pay:
And this makes FRIENDS ſuch *miracles* below.

The wearied pleaſuriſt, ſinking under the weight that preys upon his ſpirits, flies to ſcenes of public gaiety or private ſplendor, in fond, but vain, expectation, that they will diſpel his diſcontent, and recreate his mind; but he finds, alas! that the fancied aſylum affords him no reſt. The ever-craving appetite for paſtime grows by what it feeds on; and the worm, which devoured his delight amidſt the ſylvan ſcenery of Solitude, ſtill accompanies him to crowded halls of elegance and feſtivity. While he eagerly embraces every object that promiſes to ſupply the direful vacancy of his mind, he exhauſts its remaining ſtrength; enlarges the wound he is ſo anxiouſly endeavouring to heal; and, by too eagerly graſping at the phantom Pleaſure, loſes, perhaps for ever, the ſubſtantial power of being happy.

Men, whoſe minds are capable of higher enjoyments, always feel theſe perturbed ſenſations, when, deluded into a faſhionable party,

they find nothing to excite curioſity or intereſt their feelings; and where they are peſtered by the frivolous importunities of thoſe for whom they cannot entertain either friendſhip or eſteem. How, indeed, is it poſſible for a ſenſible mind to feel the ſlighteſt approbation, when a coxcomb, enamoured of his own eloquence, and ſwoln with the pride of ſelf-conceited merit, tires, by his loquacious nonſenſe, all around him.

The great LEIBNITZ * was obſerved by his ſervant frequently to take notes while he ſat in church, and the domeſtic very rationally conceived that he was making obſervations on the ſubject of the ſermon; but it is more conſiſtent with the character of this philoſopher to conclude, that he was indulging the powers of his own

* *William Godefroi*, Baron de Leibnitz, the ſon of *Frederick Leibnitz*, Profeſſor of Moral Philoſophy in the Univerſity of *Leipſig*, was born at *Leipſig*, in Saxony, on the 23d of June, 1646. He was one of thoſe rare productions upon whom Nature had profuſely beſtowed her richeſt gifts. His capacious mind was ſaturated and adorned with every ſpecies of literature. The arts and ſciences were equally at his command. The poets, orators, hiſtorians, lawyers, divines, philoſophers, and mathematicians, furniſhed him with their choiceſt ſtores. He reconciled PLATO with ARISTOTLE, and ARISTOTLE with DES CARTES. But the ſtudy of the law was his principal object, and in which he attained to an uncommon degree of excellence. He died on the 14th of November, 1716.

own capacious and excurſive mind, when thoſe of the preacher ceaſed to intereſt him. Thus it happens, that while the multitude are driven from Solitude to Society, by being tired of themſelves, there are ſome, and thoſe not a few, who ſeek refuge in rational retirement from the frivolous diſſipation of company.

An indolent mind is as irkſome to itſelf as it is intolerable to others; but an active mind finds inexhauſtible reſources in its own power. The firſt is forced to fly from itſelf for enjoyment; while the other calmly reſigns itſelf to its own ſuggeſtions, and always meets with the happineſs it has vainly ſought for in its communion with the world.

" ——— The man who conſecrates his hours
" By vig'rous effort and an honeſt aim,
" At once draws out the ſting of life and death,
" And walks with Nature in the paths of Peace.
" But thoughtleſs, giddy, inconſiſtent man,
" Like children babbling nonſenſe in their ſports,
" Cenſures kind Nature for a ſpan too ſhort;
" And feels the ſpan ſo ſhort quite tedious too;
" Tortures invention; all expedients tires
" To laſh the ling'ring moments into ſpeed,
" And whirl them, happy riddance!, from themſelves." *

To

* " Quite jaded with protracted amuſements," ſays a celebrated moral writer, " we yawn over them. The dull drone of " nominal

To rouſe the ſoul from that lethargy into which its powers are ſo apt to drop from the tediouſneſs of life, it is neceſſary to apply a ſtimulus both to the head and to the heart. Something muſt be contrived to ſtrike the ſenſes and intereſt the mind. But it is much more difficult to convey pleaſure to others than to receive it ourſelves; and while the many wait in anxious hope of being entertained, they find but few who

" nominal diverſion ſtill hums on when the ſhort tune of en-
" joyment is over. Like the bear in the fable, we hug our
" darling to death. Inſtead of rejoicing in tribulation, we
" ſorrow in delight: for this eternal round of vanities is trod
" leſs for the pleaſure it brings than for the pain it ſuſpends.
" It is a refuge, not a prize. Like criminals, we fly to it
" from our much-injured, unfortunate foes, OURSELVES;
" which chide and ſting us when alone: when together, we
" ſupport each others ſpirits; which is like ſailors clinging
" to each other for ſafety when the veſſel is ſinking. In the
" boundleſs field of licentiouſneſs, ſome baſtard joys may
" riſe that look gay, more eſpecially at a diſtance; but they
" ſoon wither. No joys are always ſweet, and flouriſh long,
" but ſuch as have ſelf-approbation for their root, and the di-
" vine favour for their ſhelter: but we are for joys of our own
" creation, the ſeeds of which heaven never ſowed in our
" hearts. But we may as well invade another prerogative of
" heaven, and, with the tyrant of *Elis*, pretend to make thun-
" der and lightning as real joy. I ſay real joy; for *joy* we
" may make, but not *cheerfulneſs*. Joy may ſubſiſt without
" thought; Cheerfulneſs will frame it. Joy is from the pulſe;
" Cheerfulneſs from the heart. THAT may give a momentary
" flaſh of pleaſure; THIS alone makes a happy man."

who are capable of entertaining. Diſappointment increaſes the eagerneſs of deſire; and the uneaſy multitude ruſh to places of public reſort, endeavouring, by noiſe and buſtle, feſtive gratification, elegant decoration, rich dreſſes, ſplendid illuminations, ſportive dances, and ſprightly muſic, to awaken the dormant faculties, and agitate the ſtagnant ſenſibilities of the ſoul. Theſe ſcenes may be conſidered the machineries of Pleaſure; they produce a temporary effect, without requiring much effort or co-operation to obtain it; while thoſe higher delights of which retirement is capable, cannot be truly enjoyed without a certain degree of intellectual exertion. There are, indeed, many minds ſo totally corrupted by the unceaſing purſuits of theſe vain and empty pleaſures, that they are utterly incapable of reliſhing intellectual delight; which, as it affords an enjoyment totally unconnected with, and independent of, common ſociety, requires a diſpoſition and capacity which common company can never beſtow. Retirement, therefore, and its attendant enjoyments, are of a nature too refined for the groſs and vulgar capacities of the multitude, who are more diſpoſed to gratify their intellectual indolence by receiving a ſpecies of entertainment which does not require from them the exertion of thought, than to enjoy

pleaſures

pleaſures of a nobler kind, which can only be procured by a rational reſtraint of the paſſions, and a proper exerciſe of the powers of the mind. Violent and tumultuous impreſſions can alone gratify ſuch characters, whoſe pleaſures, like thoſe of the ſlothful *Sybarites*, only indicate the pain they undergo in ſtriving to be happy: but

Were all men happy, revellings would ceaſe,
That opiate for inquietude within.
No man was ever truly bleſt,
But it compos'd, and gave him ſuch a caſt
As FOLLY might miſtake for want of JOY;
A caſt unlike the triumph of the proud;
A modeſt aſpect and a ſmiling heart;
A ſpring perennial riſing in the breaſt,
And permanent as pure! No turbid ſtream
Of rapt'rous exultation, ſwelling high,
Which, like land floods, impetuous flow awhile,
Then ſink at once, and leave us in the mire.
What does the man who tranſient joy prefers,
What, but prefer the bubbles to the ſtream?
Vain are all ſudden ſallies of delight,
Convulſions of a weak diſtemper'd joy.
JOY's a fixt ſtate, a tenure, not a ſtart.
The weak have REMEDIES; the wiſe have JOYS.
The firſt ſure ſymptoms of a mind in health,
Is reſt of heart, and pleaſures felt at home.

Men, eager for the enjoyment of worldly pleaſures, ſeldom attain the object they purſue. Diſſatisfied with the enjoyments of the moment, they

they long for ſome abſent delight, which ſeems to promiſe a more poignant gratification. Their joys are like thoſe of TANTALUS, always in view, but never within reach. The activity of ſuch characters leads to no beneficial end: they are perpetually in motion, without making any progreſs: they ſpur on "the lazy foot of TIME;" and then complain of the rapidity of its flight, only becauſe they have made no good uſe of its preſence: They "take no note of time, but by its loſs:" and year follows year, only to increaſe their uneaſineſs. If the bright beam of Aurora wake them from their perturbed repoſe, it is only to create new anxieties how they are to drag through the paſſing day. The change of ſeaſons produces no change in their wearied diſpoſitions; and every hour comes and goes with equal indifference and diſcontent.

The pleaſures of Society, however, although they are attended with ſuch unhappy effects, and pernicious conſequences, to men of weak heads and corrupted hearts, who only follow them for the purpoſe of indulging the follies, and gratifying the vices, to which they have given birth, are yet capable of affording to THE WISE and THE VIRTUOUS, a high, rational, ſublime, and ſatisfactory enjoyment. The world is the only theatre upon which great and noble actions can be

be performed, or the heights of moral and intellectual excellence uſefully attained. The ſociety of the WISE and GOOD, excluſive of the pleaſing relaxation it affords from the anxieties of buſineſs, and the cares of life, conveys valuable information to the mind, and virtuous feelings to the breaſt. There experience imparts its wiſdom in a manner equally engaging and impreſſive; the faculties are improved; and knowledge increaſed. Youth and age reciprocally contribute to the happineſs of each other. Such a ſociety, while it adds firmneſs to the character, gives faſhion to the manners; and opens immediately to the view, the delightful models of wiſdom and integrity. It is only in ſuch ſociety that man can rationally hope to exerciſe, with any proſpect of ſucceſs, that *latent principle*, which continually prompts him to purſue the *high felicity* of which he feels his nature capable, and of which the Creator has permitted him to form a faint idea.

" In every human heart there lies reclin'd
" Some atom pregnant with ethereal mind;
" Some plaſtic power, ſome intellectual ray,
" Some genial ſun-beam from the ſource of day;
" Something that warms, and, reſtleſs to aſpire,
" Wakes the young heart, and ſets the ſoul on fire;
" And bids us all our inborn powers employ
" To catch the phantom of ideal Joy."

SORROW

SORROW frequently drives its unhappy victims from Solitude into the vortex of Society as a means of relief; for Solitude is terrible to thoſe whoſe minds are torn with anguiſh for the loſs of ſome dear friend, whom death has, perhaps, taken untimely from their arms; and who would willingly renounce all worldly joys, to hear one accent of that beloved voice which uſed, in calm retirement, to fill his ear with harmony, and his heart with rapture.

SOLITUDE alſo is terrible to thoſe whoſe felicity is founded on popular applauſe; who have acquired a degree of fame by intrigue, and actions of counterfeited virtue; and who ſuffer the moſt excruciating anxiety to preſerve their ſpurious fame. Conſcious of the fraudulent means by which they acquired poſſeſſion of it, and of the weak foundation on which it is built, it appears continually to totter, and always ready to overwhelm them in its ruins. Their attention is ſedulouſly called to every quarter; and, in order to prop up the unſubſtantial fabric, they bend with mean ſubmiſſion to the pride of power; flatter the vanity, and accommodate themſelves to the vices, of THE GREAT; cenſure the genius that provokes their jealouſy; ridicule the virtue that ſhames the conduct of their patrons; ſubmit to all the follies of the age; take advantage

tage of its errors; cheriſh its prejudices; applaud its ſuperſtition, and defend its vices. The faſhionable circles may, perhaps, welcome ſuch characters as their beſt ſupporters, and higheſt ornaments; but to them the calm and tranquil pleaſures of retirement are dreary and diſguſting.

To all thoſe, indeed, whom VICE has betrayed into GUILT, and whoſe boſoms are ſtung by the adders of REMORSE, Solitude is doubly terrible; and they fly from its ſhades to ſcenes of worldly pleaſure, in the hope of being able to ſilence the keen reproaches of violated conſcience in the tumults of Society.—Vain attempt!

"GUILT is the ſource of SORROW! 'tis the fiend,
"Th' avenging fiend, that follows them behind
"With whips and ſtings. The bleſt know none of this,
"But reſt in everlaſting peace of mind,
"And find the height of all their heaven is GOODNESS."

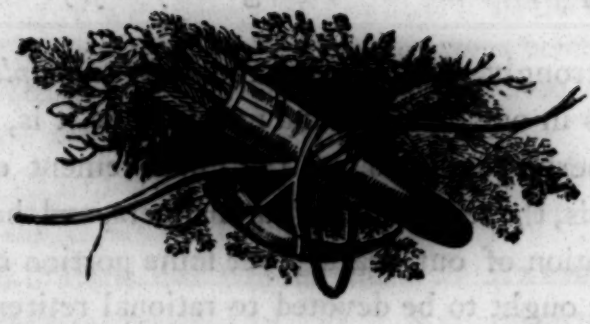
SOLITUDE, indeed, as well as RELIGION, has been repreſented in ſuch diſmal, diſagreeable colours, by thoſe who were incapable of taſting its ſweets, and enjoying its advantages, that many diſmiſs it totally from all their ſchemes of happineſs, and fly to it only to alleviate the bitterneſs of ſome momentary paſſion, or temporary adverſity, or to hide the bluſhes of approaching ſhame. But there are advantages to be derived from

from Solitude even under ſuch circumſtances, by thoſe who are otherwiſe incapable of enjoying them. Thoſe who know the moſt delightful comforts, and ſatisfactory enjoyments, of which a well-regulated Solitude is productive, like thoſe who are acquainted with the ſolid benefits to be derived from RELIGION, will ſeek Retirement, in the hours of proſperity and content, as the only means by which thay can be enjoyed in true perfection. The tranquillity of its ſhades will give richneſs to their joys; its uninterrupted quietude will enable them to expatiate on the fulneſs of their felicity; and they will turn their eyes with ſoft compaſſion on the miſeries of the world when compared with the bleſſings they enjoy.

Strongly, therefore, as the *ſocial principle* operates in our breaſts; and neceſſary as it is, when properly regulated, to the improvement of our minds, the refinement of our manners, and the amelioration of our hearts; yet ſome portion of our time ought to be devoted to rational retirement: and we muſt not conclude that thoſe who occaſionally abſtain from the tumultuous pleaſures, and promiſcuous enjoyments of the world, are moroſe characters, or of peeviſh diſpoſitions; nor ſtigmatize thoſe who appear to prefer the calm delights of Solitude to the tumultuous pleaſures of the world, as unnatural and anti-ſocial.

"Whoever

" Whoever thinks, muſt ſee that man was made
" To face the ſtorm, not languiſh in the ſhade:
" Action's his ſphere, and for that ſphere deſign'd,
" Eternal pleaſures open on his mind.
" For this fair Hope leads on th' impaſſion'd ſoul
" Thro' life's wild lab'rinths to her diſtant goal;
" Paints in each dream, to fan the genial flame,
" The pomp of riches, and the pride of fame;
" Or fondly gives Reflection's cooler eye
" In SOLITUDE, an image of a future ſky."



CHAPTER THE SECOND.

OF

THE MOTIVES TO SOLITUDE.

THE motives which induce men to exchange the tumultuous joys of Society for the calm and temperate pleaſures of Solitude are various and accidental; but whatever may be the final cauſe of ſuch an exchange, it is generally founded on an inclination to eſcape from ſome preſent or impending conſtraint; to ſhake off the ſhackles of the world; to taſte the ſweets of ſoft repoſe; to enjoy the free and undiſturbed exertion of the intellectual faculties; or to perform, beyond the reach of ridicule, the important duties of religion. But the buſy purſuits of worldly-minded men prevent the greater part of the ſpecies from feeling theſe motives, and, of courſe, from taſting the ſweets of unmoleſted exiſtence. Their pleaſures are purſued in paths which lead to very different goals: and the real, conſtant, unaffected lover of Retirement is a character ſo rarely found, that it ſeems to prove the truth of LORD VERULAM's * obſervation, that he who is really attached

* LORD BACON ſays, "It would have been hard for him who ſpoke it, to put more truth and untruth together in as few

attached to SOLITUDE, muſt be either more or leſs than man; and certain it is, that while the WISE and VIRTUOUS diſcover in Retirement an uncommon and tranſcending brightneſs of character, the VICIOUS and the IGNORANT are buried under its weight, and ſink even beneath their ordinary level. Retirement gives additional firmneſs to the principles of thoſe who ſeek it from a noble love of independence, but looſens the

few words, than in that ſpeech, '*Whoever is delighted in* SOLITUDE, *is either a wild beaſt or a god.*' For it is moſt true, that a natural and ſecret hatred and averſion toward ſociety in any man hath ſomewhat of the ſavage beaſt: but it is moſt untrue, that it ſhould have any character at all of the Divine nature; except it proceed, not out of a pleaſure in Solitude, but out of a love and deſire to ſequeſter a man's ſelf for a higher converſation; ſuch as is found to have been falſely and feignedly in ſome of the heathens; as *Epimenides*, the Arcadian; *Numa*, the Roman; *Empedocles*, the Sicilian; and *Appollonius*, of Tyana; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the church. But little do men perceive what SOLITUDE is, and how far it extendeth: for a crowd is not company; and faces are but gallery pictures; and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little: "*Magna civitas, magna ſolitudo*;" becauſe in a great town friends are ſcattered, ſo that there is not that fellowſhip for the moſt part, which is in leſs neighbourhoods. But we may go farther, and affirm moſt truly, that it is a mere and miſerable Solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderneſs; and even in this ſenſe alſo of Solitude, whoſoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendſhip, he taketh it of the beaſt, and not from humanity."

the feeble conſiſtency of thoſe who only ſeek it from novelty and caprice.

To render Solitude ſerviceable, the powers of the mind, and the ſenſibilities of the heart, muſt be co-equal, and reciprocally regulate each other: weakneſs of intellect, when joined with quick feelings, hurries its poſſeſſor into all the tumult of worldly pleaſure; and when mingled with torpid inſenſibility, impels him to the cloiſter. Extremes both in Solitude and in Society are equally baneful.

A ſtrong ſenſe of ſhame, the keen compunctions of conſcience, a deep regret for paſt follies, the mortification ariſing from diſappointed hopes, and the dejection which accompanies diſordered health, ſometimes ſo affect the ſpirits, and deſtroy the energies of the mind, that the ſoul ſhrinks back upon itſelf at the very approach of company, and withdraws to the ſhades of Solitude, only to bleed and languiſh in obſcurity. The inclination to retire, in caſes of this deſcription, ariſes from a fear of meeting the reproaches or diſregard of an unpitying and reflecting world, and not from that erect ſpirit which diſpoſes the mind to ſelf-enjoyment.*

* "It may be laid down (ſays a celebrated writer) as a poſition which will ſeldom deceive, that, when a man cannot bear his own

The diſguſt ariſing from ſatiety of worldy pleaſures frequently induces a temporary deſire for Solitude. The dark and gloomy nature, indeed, of this diſpoſition is ſuch, as neither the ſplendors of a throne, nor the light of philoſophy, are able to irradiate and diſpel. The auſtere and petulant HERACLITUS * abandoned all the

own company, there is ſomething wrong. He muſt fly from himſelf, either becauſe he feels a tediouſneſs in life from the equipoiſe of an empty mind, which, having no tendency to one notion more than another, but as it is impelled by ſome external power, muſt always have recourſe to foreign objects; or he muſt be afraid of the intruſion of ſome unpleaſing ideas, and perhaps is ſtruggling to eſcape from the remembrance of a loſs, the fear of a calamity, or ſome other thought of greater horrors. Thoſe whom ſorrow incapacitates to enjoy the pleaſures of contemplation, may properly apply to ſuch diverſions, provided they are innocent, as lay ſtrong hold on the attention; and thoſe whom fear of any future affliction chain down to miſery, muſt endeavour to obviate the danger. But there are thoſe who are burthenſome to themſelves merely becauſe they want ſubjects for reflection, and to whom the volume of nature is thrown open, without offering them pleaſure or inſtruction, becauſe they never learned to read the characters.

* HERACLITUS, the celebrated Grecian philoſopher, was a native of Epheſus, and flouriſhed about five hundred years before the Chriſtian æra. His melancholy and dejected mind forced him inceſſantly to lament, and frequently to weep over, the miſeries and depravity of human nature. This diſpoſition, which he indulged to a ridiculous exceſs, joined to an enigmatical manner of expreſſing himſelf, procured him the appellation of

the pleaſures and comforts of ſociety, in the vain hope of being able to gratify his diſcontented

 mind,

of *The obſcure and crying Philoſopher*. "What is man?" he exclaimed: "What his boaſted reaſon? His knowledge is mere ignorance; his grandeur, littleneſs; his ſtrength, weakneſs; and his joy, grief." But, notwithſtanding this opinion, he maintained that life was the gift of the Great Creator; that it ought to be preſerved with the greateſt anxiety and care; that it cannot be diſpoſed of at the caprice of its owner; and that man muſt wait, and patiently endure all the ills that fleſh is heir to, until it ſhall pleaſe the Almighty to call him to the great account for all his actions. HERACLITUS compoſed many excellent works, particularly a Treatiſe upon the ELEMENTS OF NATURE. Of this work EURIPIDES ſent a copy to SOCRATES, who, on returning it, obſerved, that thoſe parts which he was capable of comprehending were excellent, and that he had no doubt that thoſe which were above his comprehenſion were equally good. DARIUS, the king of Perſia, on peruſing this production, wrote a highly complimentary letter to the author, and preſſed him in the warmeſt manner to viſit the Perſian court, where his merits and abilities would be better underſtood and received than they had been in Greece; but the ſullen and auſtere philoſopher ſurlily rejected all the elegant and polite overtures of the monarch. It is ſaid that the acerbity of his temper was increaſed to ſuch a degree by his occaſional intercourſes with mankind, that he at length conceived an unalterable antipathy to the ſpecies, and retired to a cheerleſs and inhoſpitable mountain, where he lived for many years, in common with the beaſts of the field, upon the ſcanty herbage of the earth. Having, however, by this mode of living, contracted a dropſy, he once more deſcended into the neighbouring cities, and conſulted the faculty, in his enigmatical way, reſpecting the cure of his diſtemper, by enquiring whether their art enabled

them

mind, by indulging an antipathy againſt his fellow creatures: flying from their preſence, he retired, like his predeceſſor TIMON, to a high mountain, where he lived for many years among the beaſts of the deſart, on the rude produce of the earth, regardleſs of all the comforts civilized ſociety is capable of beſtowing. Such a temper of mind proceeds from a ſickened intellect and diſordered ſenſibility, and indicates the loſs of that fine, but firm, ſenſe of pleaſure, from which alone all real enjoyment muſt ſpring. He who having taſted all that can delight the ſenſes, warm the heart, and ſatisfy the mind, ſecretly ſighs over the vanity of his enjoyments, and beholds all the cheering objects of life with indifference,

them to *dry up a deluge*; but the phyſician not ſatisfying his queſtion, he incloſed himſelf in a dunghill, under an idea that its artificial heat would diſpel the ſuperabundant moiſture which had cauſed his complaint. After repeated experiments, he quitted, with regret, at the age of ſixty, the world he had ſo much affected to deſpiſe. The Epheſians expreſſed their aſtoniſhment when they firſt beheld this great man playing at marbles with children: "I had rather," ſaid he, "amuſe myſelf thus than have the management of your affairs." He uſed to ſay, that "quarrels ought to be ſtifled like fires the moment they break out;" that "it is more excuſable for a people to fight for the preſervation of their *laws* than their *lives*; and that the nature of the human ſoul is inſcrutable." Some fragments of the works of this extraordinary man ſtill remain; they were publiſhed, together with thoſe of DEMOCRITUS and TIMON, by *Henry Stephens*, in octavo, in the year 1573, under the title *Poëſis Philoſophica.*

indifference, is, indeed, a melancholy example of the ſad effects which reſult from an intemperate purſuit of worldly pleaſures. Such a man may perhaps abandon ſociety, for it is no longer capable of affording him delight; but he will be debarred from all rational ſolitude, becauſe he is incapable of enjoying it; and a refuge to the brute creation ſeems his only reſource. I have, indeed, obſerved even noblemen and princes, in the midſt of abundance, and ſurrounded by all the ſplendour that ſucceſsful ambition, high ſtate, vaſt riches, and varying pleaſures can confer, ſinking the ſad victims of ſatiety; diſguſted with their glories; and diſſatisfied with all thoſe enjoyments which are ſuppoſed to give a higher reliſh to the ſoul: but they had happily enriched their minds with notions far ſuperior to all thoſe which flow from the corrupted ſcenes of vitiated pleaſures; and they found in Solitude a ſoft and tranquil pillow, which invited their perturbed minds, and at length lulled their feelings into calm repoſe. Theſe characters were betrayed for a time by the circumſtances which ſurrounded their exalted ſtations into an exceſs of enjoyment; but they were able to reliſh the ſimple occupations, and to enjoy the tranquil amuſements of Retirement with as much ſatisfaction as they had formerly purſued the political intrigues of the cabinet, the hoſtile glories of the field, or the ſofter indulgences of

peaceful luxury, and were thereby rendered capable of deriving comfort and conſolation from that ſource which ſeems only to heighten and exaſperate the miſeries of thoſe whoſe minds are totally abſorbed in the diſſipations of life. *

The motives, indeed, which lead men either to temporary Retirement, or abſolute Solitude, are innumerably various. Minds delicately ſuſceptible to the impreſſions of virtue, frequently avoid ſociety, only to avoid the pain they feel in obſerving the vices and follies of the world. Minds active and vigorous, frequently retire to avoid

* The love of Retirement (ſays Dr. JOHNSON) has in all ages adhered cloſely to thoſe minds which have been moſt enlarged or elevated by genius. Thoſe who enjoyed every thing generally ſuppoſed to confer happineſs, have been found to ſeek it in the ſhades of privacy. Though they poſſeſſed both power and riches, and were therefore ſurrounded by men who conſidered it as their chief intereſt to remove from them every thing that might offend their eaſe, or interrupt their pleaſures, they have found themſelves unable to purſue the race of life without frequent reſpirations of intermediate SOLITUDE. Nor will greatneſs or abundance exempt him from the importunities of this deſire, ſince, if he is born to think, he cannot reſtrain himſelf from a thouſand enquiries and ſpeculations, which he muſt purſue by his own reaſon, and which the ſplendor of his condition can only hinder: for thoſe who are moſt exalted above dependence or controul, are yet condemned to pay ſo large a tribute of their time to ceremony and popularity, that, according to the Greek proverb, "*No man in the houſe is more a ſlave than the maſter of it.*

avoid the clogs and incumbrances by which the tumults and engagements of ſociety diſtract and impede the free and full enjoyment of their faculties. The baſis, indeed, of every inclination to Solitude is the love of liberty, either mental or corporeal; a freedom from all conſtraint and interruption: but the form in which the inclination diſplays itſelf, varies according to the character and circumſtances of the individual.

Men who are engaged in purſuits foreign to the natural inclination of their minds, ſigh continually for Retirement, as the only means of recruiting their fatigued ſpirits, and procuring a comfortable repoſe. Scenes of tranquillity can alone afford them any idea of enjoyment. A refined ſenſe of duty, indeed, frequently induces noble minds to ſacrifice all perſonal pleaſure to the great intereſts of the public, or the private benefits of their fellow creatures; and they reſiſt every oppoſing obſtacle with courage, and bear every adverſity with fortitude, under thoſe cheering ſentiments, and proud delights, which reſult from the purſuits of active charity and benevolence, even though their career be thwarted by thoſe whoſe advantages they deſign to promote. The exhilarating idea of being inſtrumental in affording relief to ſuffering

humanity, reconciles every difficulty, however great; prompts to new exertions, however fruitleſs; and ſuſtains them in thoſe arduous conflicts, in which all who aſpire to promote the intereſt, and improve the happineſs of mankind, muſt occaſionally engage, eſpecially when oppoſed by the pride and profligacy of the rich and great, and the obſtinacy and caprice of the ignorant and unfeeling. But the moſt virtuous and ſteady minds cannot always bear up againſt "a ſea of troubles, or, by oppoſing, end them;" and, depreſſed by temporary adverſities, will arraign the cruelty of their condition, and ſigh for the ſhades of peace and tranquillity. How tranſcendent muſt be the enjoyment of a great and good Miniſter, who, after having anxiouſly attended to the important buſineſs of the ſtate, and diſengaged himſelf from the neceſſary but irkſome occupation of official detail, refreſhes his mind in the calm of ſome delightful retreat, with works of taſte, and thoughts of fancy and imagination! A change, indeed, both of ſcene and ſentiment, is abſolutely neceſſary, not only in the ſerious and important employments, but even in the common occupations and idle amuſements of life. Pleaſure ſprings from contraſt. The moſt charming object loſes a portion of its power to delight by being continually beheld. Alternate Society and Solitude are neceſſary to the full enjoyment

joyment both of the pleaſures of the world and the delights of Retirement. It is, however, aſſerted by the celebrated PASCAL, whoſe life was far from being inactive, that quietude is a beam of the original purity of our nature, and that the height of human happineſs is in Solitude and tranquillity. Tranquillity, indeed, is the wiſh of all: the good, while purſuing the track of virtue; the great, while following the ſtar of glory; and the little, while creeping in the ſtyes of diſſipation, ſigh for tranquillity, and make it the great object which they ultimately hope to attain. How anxiouſly does the ſailor, on the high and giddy maſt, when rolling through tempeſtuous ſeas, caſt his eyes over the foaming billows, and anticipate the calm ſecurity he hopes to enjoy when he reaches the wiſh'd-for ſhore! Even kings grow weary of their ſplendid ſlavery, and nobles ſicken under increaſing dignities. All, in ſhort, feel leſs delight in the actual enjoyment of worldly purſuits, however great and honourable they may be, than in the idea of their being able to relinquiſh them, and retire to

"———— Some calm ſequeſter'd ſpot;
"The world forgetting, by the world forgot."

The reſtleſs and ambitious PYRRHUS * hoped that eaſe and tranquillity would be the ulti-

 mate

* PYRRHUS, the celebrated ſovereign of *Epirus*, was the deſcendant of PYRRHUS, the ſon of *Achilles* and *Deidamia*, and king

mate reward of his enterprizing conqueſts. FREDERICK THE GREAT diſcovered, perhaps unintentionally,

king of *Scyros*. While he was yet an infant in his nurſe's arms, the chance of war deprived him at once of his father and his throne. *Caſſandra*, king of Macedonia, eager to deſtroy the infant prince, aſſailed the dwelling in which he was ſaid to have been placed; but his fond and faithful attendants, *Androclides* and *Angelus*, on the firſt news of his father's fate, had conveyed him to a place of ſafety in the kingdom of *Illyria*, whoſe ſovereign, *Glaucias*, generouſly educated him as his own ſon; and when he had arrived at the age of twelve years, placed him, by the power of his arms, on his native throne. Nurtured amidſt the clang of hoſtile arms, war appeared to be his ſole delight; and he indulged his reſtleſs, enterprizing diſpoſition in ſucceſſive and obſtinate conflicts with the Macedonians, Tarrentines, and other neighbouring powers. On giving battle to the conſul *Lævinus*, near Heraclea, he gained a complete victory; but the carnage was great, and almoſt equal numbers killed on each ſide. "Alas!" exclaimed the conqueror, on viewing his ſurviving troops, "if I gain ſuch another victory, I ſhall return I fear almoſt alone to *Epirus!*" Fond, however, as he appeared of war, he profeſſed to follow it only to procure a ſolid and permanent peace; and he ſent the philoſopher *Cineus* for that purpoſe to *Rome*. The philoſopher harangued the ſenate on the ſubject of his miſſion with an extraordinary degree of zeal and eloquence; but the Romans coolly and ſagaciouſly replied, "If PYRRHUS really wiſhes for the friendſhip of the Roman people, let him firſt abdicate their dominions, and then the ſincerity of his propoſals of peace may gain ſome credit." After a great variety of fortune, he laid ſiege to *Argos*, and, by the treachery of *Ariſtius*, entered the city; but having imprudently introduced his elephants, their courſe was impeded by the narrowneſs of the ſtreets, and his troops thereby thrown into confuſion. The guards who attended him, after having fought

for

intentionally, how pleaſing and ſatisfactory the idea of tranquillity was to his mind; when,

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for a long time with deſperate valour, left their maſter, and ſought ſafety in flight. PYRRHUS, having thrown away his plumed helmet, to prevent his being known, extricated himſelf from the hands of his enemies by extraordinary exertions of valour. He had nearly eſcaped, when a common ſoldier of Argos darted a javelin furiouſly at his breaſt, which the prince dexterouſly parried with his ſhield, and had lifted his faulchion to cleave the aſſailant in two; but the wife of the ſoldier, who had obſerved the conflict from the turret of the adjoining houſe, perceiving her huſband's danger, tumbled a heavy ſtone upon the head of the king, and levelled him with the ground, while the ſoldier advancing, cut off his head. Thus died, in the year 272 before Chriſt, a prince equally celebrated for his virtues and his vices. In the intercourſe of life he was mild, and not eaſily provoked; but ardent and quick to repay a kindneſs. Some young officers, during the hours of intoxication, having ſpoken diſreſpectfully of him, he ſent for them into his preſence, and aſked them if it was true, that they had uſed the words imputed to them. "Yes, my lord," replied one of them: "and we ſhould probably have ſaid a great deal more, if we could have got more wine." The king laughed at the livelineſs of the obſervation, and diſmiſſed the offenders. When ſome of his courtiers adviſed him to baniſh a certain ill-tongued ambaſſador, who abuſed him behind his back, "Let the fellow ſtay here," ſaid he, "and ſpeak againſt me to a few, rather than ramble about, and give me a bad character to all the world." Deſcribing to *Cineus* the conqueſts he intended to make in Italy, Sicily, Lybia, Carthage, and Greece, "And when we have conquered all theſe," aſked *Cineus*, "what are we to do then?" "Why then," ſaid PYRRHUS, laughing, "we will take our eaſe, and drink and be merry." "And why," replied *Cineus*, "can we not repoſe and be merry without theſe conqueſts?" The invention of the game of CHESS is attributed to this prince.

immediately after he had gained a glorious and important victory, he exclaimed on the field of battle, "*Oh, that my anxieties may now be ended!*" The emperor JOSEPH alſo diſplayed the predominancy of this paſſion for tranquillity and retirement, when, on aſking the famous German pedeſtrian BARON GROTHAUS, what countries he next intended to traverſe, was told a long number in rapid ſucceſſion. "And what then?" continued the emperor. "Why then," replied the Baron, "I intend to retire to the place of my nativity, and enjoy myſelf in rural quietude, and the cultivation of my patrimonial farm." "Ah, my good friend," exclaimed the emperor, "if you will truſt the voice of ſad experience, you had better neglect the walk, and retire, before it is too late, to the quietude and tranquillity you propoſe."

PUBLIUS SCIPIO, ſurnamed AFRICANUS, during the time that he was inveſted with the higheſt offices of Rome, and immediately engaged in the moſt important concerns of the empire, withdrew, whenever an opportunity occurred, from public obſervation to peaceful privacy; and though not devoted, like TULLY, to the elegant occupations of literature and philoſophy, declared that, *He was never leſs alone than when alone.* He was, ſays PLUTARCH, incomparably the firſt, both

both in virtue and power, of the Romans of his time; but in his higheſt tide of fortune, he voluntarily abandoned the ſcene of his glory, and calmly retired to his beautiful villa in the midſt of a romantic foreſt, near *Liturnum*, where he cloſed, in philoſophic tranquillity, the laſt years of a long and ſplendid life. *

CICERO,

* PUBLIUS CORNELIUS SCIPIO was the ſon of *P. C. Scipio*, who was conſul in the ſecond Punic war, when *Hannibal* croſſed the Alps to invade Italy. The battle was fought on the banks of the *Teſin*; and the old conſul, covered with honourable wounds in the ſervice of his country, was taken priſoner; but his ſon, who was then only ſeventeen years of age, and ſerving his firſt campaign, delivered his father from captivity, and ſaved his life. The glorious action eſtabliſhed his character, and influenced all the future fortunes of his life. At the battle of *Canna* he ſaved the republic, by courageouſly preventing the deſertion of a number of officers whoſe fear had induced them to concert meaſures for quitting the field. At the age of twenty-ſeven, he was appointed *Edile* by the voice of the people at large, in oppoſition to the tribunes, who thought him too young and inexperienced to perform the duties of the office. He was ſent into Spain; and in four years he completely defeated the enemy, and made himſelf maſter of CARTHAGENA. The wife of *Mardonius*, and the children of *Judebelis*, principal perſonages in the country, were among the priſoners; but the generous conqueror ſent them, with every mark of reſpect, to their afflicted relations. His virtues, indeed, contributed as much to his victories as his courage. Carrying the war into Africa, he beat *Aſdrubal*, the moſt celebrated of the Carthaginian generals; overcame *Syphax*, king of *Numidia*; and at the battle of *Zama*, put the great *Hannibal* to flight, leaving twenty thouſand Carthaginians

CICERO, in the plenitude of his power, at a time when his influence over the minds of his fellow citizens was at its height, retired, with the retiring liberties of his country, to his *Tuſculum* villa, to deplore the approaching fate of his beloved city, and to eaſe, in ſoothing Solitude, the anguiſh of his heart.

HORACE, alſo, the gay and elegant favourite of the great AUGUSTUS, even in the meridian rays of royal favour, renounced the ſmiles of greatneſs,

thaginians dead upon the field of battle. This victory, while it produced to *Rome* an advantageous peace, procured for the victor the honour of a triumph, and the appellation of AFRICANUS. A few years afterwards he obtained the conſulſhip a ſecond time; and, paſſing into *Aſia*, defeated *Antiochus*; returned to ROME; and, by the enemies his greatneſs and virtues had created, was impeached of peculation before the people by the tribune *Petelius*, at the inſtigation of *Cato*: but he defended himſelf ſucceſsfully againſt the charge with that high ſpirit which marked all his actions. Diſguſted with public life, he retired to his villa at *Liturnum*, where, like an ancient Roman, he cultivated his lands in peaceful privacy, and died one hundred and eighty years before the birth of Chriſt. After his victory over *Syphax*, perceiving *Maſſiniſſa* yield with too much indulgence to the paſſion he had conceived for his captive *Sophoniſba*, SCIPIO took the king aſide, ſaying, "Believe me, we have much more to fear at our age from the indulgence of exceſſive paſſions, than from the ſword of armed enemies. He who by his wiſdom has happily learned to curb his inclination, has acquired more honour, and accompliſhed a much more important and glorious victory, than that which we have gained over *Syphax*."

greatneſs, and all the ſeductive blandiſhments of an imperial court, to enjoy his happy muſe among the romantic wilds of his ſequeſtered villa of *Tibur* near the lake *Albunea*.

But there are few characters who have paſſed the concluding ſcenes of life with more real dignity than the emperor DIOCLESIAN. In the twenty-firſt year of his reign, though he had never practiſed the leſſons of philoſophy either in the attainment or the uſe of ſupreme power, and although his reign had flowed with a tide of uninterrupted ſucceſs, he executed his memorable reſolution of abdicating the empire, and gave the world the firſt example of a reſignation which has not been very frequently imitated by ſucceeding monarchs. DIOCLESIAN was at this period only fifty-nine years of age, and in the full poſſeſſion of his mental faculties; but he had vanquiſhed all his enemies, and executed all his deſigns; and his active life, his wars, his journies, the cares of royalty, and his application to buſineſs, having impaired his conſtitution, and brought on the infirmities of a premature old age, he reſolved to paſs the remainder of his days in honourable repoſe; to place his glory beyond the reach of fortune; and to relinquiſh the theatre of the world to his younger and more active aſſociates. The ceremony of his abdication was performed in a ſpacious plain, about three miles from *Nicomedia*.

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The emperor aſcended a lofty throne, and, in a ſpeech full of reaſon and dignity, declared his intention both to the people and to the ſoldiers, who were aſſembled on this extraordinary occaſion. As ſoon as he had diveſted himſelf of the purple, he withdrew from the gazing multitude; and traverſing the city in a covered chariot, proceeded, without delay, to the favourite Retirement which he had choſen in his native country of *Dalmatia*. The emperor, who, from a ſervile origin, had raiſed himſelf to the throne, paſſed the laſt nine years of his life in a private condition at *Salona*. Reaſon had dictated, and content ſeems to have accompanied, his retreat, in which he enjoyed for a long time the reſpect of thoſe princes to whom he had reſigned the poſſeſſion of the world. It is ſeldom that minds long exerciſed in buſineſs have formed any habits of converſing with themſelves; and in the loſs of power, they principally regret the want of occupation. The amuſements of letters and of devotion, which afford ſo many reſources in Solitude, were incapable of fixing the attention of DIOCLESIAN: but he had preſerved, or, at leaſt, he ſoon recovered, a taſte for the moſt innocent as well as natural pleaſures; and his leiſure hours were ſufficiently employed in building, planting, and gardening. His anſwer to MAXIMIAN is deſervedly celebrated. He was ſolicited by that reſtleſs

reſtleſs old man to reaſſume the reins of government and the imperial purple. He rejected the temptation with a ſmile of pity, calmly obſerving, that if he could ſhew MAXIMIAN the cabbages he had planted at *Salona*, he ſhould no longer be urged to relinquiſh the enjoyment of happineſs for the purſuit of power. In his converſations with his friends, he frequently acknowledged, that of all arts the moſt difficult was that of reigning; and he expreſſed himſelf on that favourite topic with a degree of warmth which could be the reſult only of experience. "How often," was he accuſtomed to ſay, "is "it the intereſt of four or five miniſters to com- "bine together to deceive their ſovereign! Se- "cluded from mankind by his exalted dignity, "the truth is concealed from his knowledge: "he can only ſee with their eyes; he hears no- "thing but their miſrepreſentations. He con- "fers the moſt important offices upon vice and "weakneſs, and diſgraces the moſt virtuous and "deſerving among his ſubjects: and by ſuch "infamous acts the beſt and wiſeſt princes are "ſold to the venal corruption of their cour- "tiers." A juſt eſtimate of greatneſs, and the aſſurance of immortal fame, improve our reliſh for the pleaſures of Retirement.

ZENOBIA, the celebrated queen of *Palmyra* and *the Eaſt*, a female whoſe ſuperior genius broke

broke through the ſervile indolence impoſed on her ſex by the climate and manners of *Aſia*, the moſt lovely as well as the moſt heroic of her ſex, who ſpread the terror of her arms over *Arabia*, *Armenia*, and *Perſia*, and kept even the legions of the Roman empire in awe, was, after the two great battles of *Antioch* and *Emeſa*, at length ſubdued, and made the illuſtrious captive of the emperor AURELIAN; but the conqueror reſpecting the ſex, the beauty, the courage, and endowments of the Syrian queen, not only preſerved her life, but preſented her with an elegant villa at *Tibur* or *Tivoli*, about twenty miles from *Rome*; where, in happy tranquillity, ſhe fed the greatneſs of her ſoul with the noble images of HOMER, and the exalted precepts of PLATO; ſupported the adverſity of her fortunes with fortitude and reſignation; and learnt that the anxieties attendant on ambition are happily exchanged for the enjoyments of eaſe, and the comforts of philoſophy.*

CHARLES

* ZENOBIA claimed her deſcent from the Macedonian kings of *Egypt*, equalled in beauty her anceſtor CLEOPATRA, and far ſurpaſſed that princeſs in chaſtity and valour. This accompliſhed woman gave her hand to ODENATHUS, who, from a private ſtation, raiſed himſelf to the dominion of the Eaſt. She ſoon became the friend and companion of a hero; and his ſucceſs in obtaining ſplendid victories over the great king whom they twice purſued as far as the gates of *Cteſiphon*, was in a great meaſure

CHARLES THE FIFTH reſigned the government of the empire to his brother the king of the

meaſure aſcribed to her incomparable prudence and fortitude. ODENATHUS was treacherouſly murdered by MŒONIUS, his nephew; but the traitor was juſtly ſacrificed by ZENOBIA to the memory of her huſband. She filled the vacant throne, and, inſtead of the little paſſions which ſo frequently perplex a female reign, adminiſtered the affairs of ſtate by the moſt judicious maxims of policy: but it muſt be obſerved, that ſhe enjoyed the extraordinary advantage of having the great LONGINUS for her counſellor and friend. The emperor AURELIAN, in an original letter written by him to the Roman ſenate during the ſiege of *Palmyra*, pays the higheſt compliment to her abilities, and deſcribes the many difficulties he had to encounter; but his fortune and perſeverance ſurmounted every obſtacle; and ZENOBIA, diſappointed of receiving the expected ſuccours from her allies, was obliged to fly on one of the fleeteſt of her dromedaries from her tottering metropolis. She had already reached the banks of the *Euphrates*, when ſhe was overtaken by the purſuit of AURELIAN's light horſe, ſeized, and brought back a captive to the feet of the conqueror. When the Syrian queen was brought into his preſence, he ſternly aſked her why ſhe had preſumed to riſe in arms againſt the emperor of *Rome*. "Becauſe," replied the captive queen, "I diſdained to conſider as Roman Emperors, an AUREOLUS or a GALLIENUS: you alone I acknowledge as my conqueror and ſovereign." Her courage, however, deſerted her in the hour of trial; and throwing the guilt of her obſtinate reſiſtance on her adviſers, ignominiouſly purchaſed life by the ſacrifice of her fame and friends. But Mr. GIBBON feelingly obſerves, the fame of LONGINUS, who was included among the numerous and, perhaps, innocent victims of her fear, will ſurvive that of the queen, who betrayed, or the tyrant who condemned, him. Genius and learning were incapable

the Romans; and transferred all claims of obedience and allegiance to him from the Germanic body, in order that he might no longer be detained from that retreat for which he long had languiſhed. In paſſing, ſome years before, from *Valladolid* to *Placentia*, in the province of *Eſtramadura*, he was ſtruck with the delightful ſituation of the monaſtery of ST. JUSTUS, belonging to the order of ST. JEROME, not many miles diſtant from the town; and obſerved to ſome of his attendants, that this was a ſpot to which DIOCLESIAN might have retired with pleaſure. The impreſſion remained upon his mind, and he determined to make it the place of his own retreat. It was ſeated in a vale of no great extent, watered by a ſmall brook, and ſurrounded by riſing grounds covered with lofty trees; and from the nature of the ſoil, as well as the temptation of the climate, was eſteemed the moſt healthful and delicious ſituation in SPAIN. Some months before his reſignation, he had ſent an architect thither to add a new apartment to the monaſtery for his accommodation; but he gave ſtrict orders that the ſtyle of the building ſhould be

pable of moving a fierce, unlettered ſoldier; but they had ſerved to elate and harmonize the ſoul of LONGINUS. Without uttering a complaint, he calmly followed the executioner, pitying his unhappy miſtreſs, and beſtowing comfort on his afflicted friends.

be ſuch as ſuited his preſent ſtation rather than his former dignity. It conſiſted only of ſix rooms; four of them in the form of friars' cells, with naked walls; the other two, each twenty feet ſquare, were hung with brown cloth, and furniſhed in the moſt ſimple manner: they were all on a level with the ground, with a door on one ſide into a garden, of which CHARLES himſelf had given the plan, and had filled it with various plants, which he intended to cultivate with his own hands. On the other ſide they communicated with the chapel of the monaſtery in which he was to perform his devotions. In this humble retreat, hardly ſufficient for the comfortable accommodation of a private gentleman, did CHARLES enter with twelve domeſtics only, and buried in Solitude and ſilence his grandeur, his ambition, and all thoſe vaſt proſpects which, during almoſt half a century, had alarmed and agitated EUROPE; filling every kingdom in it, by turns, with the terror of his arms, and the dread of being ſubdued by his power.

Theſe inſtances of reſignation and retirement, to which many others might have been added, ſufficiently prove that a deſire to live in free leiſure, independent of the reſtraints of ſociety, is one of the moſt powerful affections of the human mind; and that Solitude, judiciouſly and rationally

ally employed, amply compenſates all that is ſacrificed for the purpoſes of enjoying it.

But there are many other ſources from whence an anti-ſocial diſpoſition may ariſe which merit conſideration. That terrible malady the *hypochondria* frequently renders the unhappy ſufferer not only averſe to Society in general, but even fearful of meeting a human being; and the ſtill more dreadful malady, *a wounded heart*, increaſes our antipathy to mankind. The fear of unfounded calumny alſo ſometimes drives weak and dejected minds into the imaginary ſhelter of obſcurity; and even ſtrong and honeſt characters, prone to diſcloſe their real ſentiments, are diſguſted at the world, from a conſciouſneſs of its being unable to liſten temperately to the voice of truth. The obſtinacy with which mankind perſiſt in habitual errors, and the violence with which they indulge inveterate paſſions, a deep regret for their follies, and the horror which their vices create, drive us frequently from their preſence. The love of ſcience, a fondneſs for the arts, and an attachment to the immortal works of genius, induce, I truſt, not a few to neglect all anxiety to learn the common news of the day, and keep them in ſome calm, ſequeſtered retreat, far from the unmeaning manners of the noiſy world, improving the genuine feelings of their hearts, and ſtoring their

minds

minds with the principles of true philoſophy. There are others, though, I fear, they are few, who, impreſſed by a ſtrong ſenſe of the duties of RELIGION, and feeling how incompatible with their practice are moſt, if not all, the factitious joys of ſocial life, retire from the corrupted ſcene, to contemplate, in ſacred privacy, the attributes of a Being unalterably pure, and infinitely good; to impreſs upon their minds ſo ſtrong a ſenſe of the importance of obedience to the divine will, of the value of the reward promiſed to virtue, and the terrors of the puniſhment denounced againſt crimes, as may overbear all temptations which temporal hope or fear can bring in their way, and enable them to bid equal defiance to joy and ſorrow; to turn away at one time from the allurements of ambition, and preſs forward at another againſt the threats of calamity.*

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* "The conduct of thoſe," ſays MONTAIGNE, in his excellent Eſſay on Solitude, "who retire from the world with devout views, and to encourage the delightful hope reſulting from the divine promiſe of immortality hereafter, is founded in the higheſt exertion of reaſon. GOD, a being of infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, and power, becomes the ſole and ſacred object of their contemplation. The pious diſpoſitions of the ſoul expand, and find a happy leiſure and indulgence. Employed in the purſuit of joys everlaſting, the pains and afflictions of mortality loſe their ſeverity and ſting. The auſterity which they ever

The dejection occaſioned by the *hypochondria* renders the mind not only averſe from, but wholly incapable of, any pleaſure, and induces the unhappy ſufferer to ſeek a ſolitude by which it is increaſed. The influence of this dreadful malady is ſo powerful, that it deſtroys all hope of remedy, and prevents thoſe exertions by which alone we are told it can be cured.

To cure the mind's wrong bias—SPLEEN,
Some recommend the bowling-green;
Some hilly walks; all, exerciſe;
Fling but a ſtone, the Giant dies:
Laugh, and be well. Monkeys have been
Extreme good doctors for the Spleen;
And kittens, if the humour hit,
Have harlequin'd away the fit.

But,

ever think it neceſſary to obſerve, is ſoftened by cuſtom; and all the dangerous paſſions and unruly appetites of the ſoul, are moderated, reſtrained, and at length ſubdued; for the unworthy appetites and paſſions of our natures are the creatures of habit, and are only ſupported by exerciſe and uſe. The tyrant Death is, under ſuch circumſtances, diſarmed of all its terrors, and they conſider his arrival as a happy event; an event which removes them from a vale of tears into the bliſsful regions of eternal joy. To attain this end, they abandon, without regret, the pleaſures and conveniences of this world: and they who happily inflame their ſouls with the ardour of this lively faith, and ſatisfactory hope, certainly create in SOLITUDE a more voluptuous and delicious life than any which this world can otherwiſe afford.

Tacitum ſylvas inter reptare ſalubres
Curantem quicquid dignum ſapiente bono que eſt.

But, alas! the heart ſhuts itſelf againſt every pleaſing ſenſation, and the mind diſmiſſes every chearing ſentiment. Joy opens in vain its feſtal arms to receive him; and he ſhuns embraces whoſe light and mirthful air would only ſerve to increaſe the melancholy of his dreary and diſtempered mind. Even the tender, affectionate offices of friendſhip, in endeavouring to ſooth and divert his mind by lively converſation and ſocial intercourſes, appear officious and ill-timed. His ſpirits are quite dejected; his faculties become torpid; and his ſenſe of enjoyment is annihilated. The charming air, which breathes to others the ſweeteſt fragrance and moſt invigorating delights, feels to him like a peſtilent congregation of vapours.

His penſive ſpirit takes the lonely grove:
Nightly he viſits all the ſylvan ſcenes,
Where far remote a melancholy moon
Raiſing her head, ſerene and ſhorn of beams,
Throws here and there the glimmerings thro' the trees,
To make more awful darkneſs.

Conſcious that his frame is totally unſtrung, and that his pulſe is incapable of beating in any pleaſant uniſon with the feelings of his healthful friends, he withers into ſorrowful decay. Every object around him appears to be at enmity with his

feelings, and comes ſhapeleſs and diſcoloured to his diſordered eyes. The gentle voice of pity grates his ears with harſh and hollow ſounds, and ſeems to reproach him with inſulting tones. Stricken by this dreadful malady, the lamentable effects of which a cruel and unfeeling world too often ridicule and deſpiſe, and conſtantly tearing open the wound it has occaſioned, the afflicted ſpirit flies from every ſcene of ſocial joy and animating pleaſure, ſeeks, as a ſole reſource, to to hide its ſorrows in ſolitary ſecluſion, and awaits, in lingering ſufferance, the ſtroke of death.

So the ſtruck deer, with ſome deep wound oppreſs'd,
Lies down to die, the arrow in his breaſt;
There hid in ſhades, and waſting day by day,
Inly he bleeds, and pants his life away. *

The

* COWLEY, the celebrated Engliſh poet, ſeems to have laboured under this melancholy diſorder, when he tells us that he had a vehement intention to retire to one of the American plantations; not to ſeek for gold, or to enrich himſelf by traffic, but to *forſake this world for ever*, with all the vanities and vexations of it; and to bury himſelf there in ſome obſcure retreat, with no other conſolation than that of letters and phlloſophy. "If," ſays Dr. JOHNSON, "he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the moſt delightful part of the new world, it may be doubted whether his diſtance from the *vanities* of life would have enabled him to keep away the *vexations*. It is

The erroneous opinions, perverſe diſpoſitions, and inveterate prejudices of the world, are ſometimes the cauſes which induce men to retire from Society, and ſeek in Solitude the enjoyments of innocence and truth. Careleſs of a commerce with thoſe for whom they can entertain no eſteem, their minds naturally incline towards thoſe ſcenes in which their fancy paints the faireſt forms of felicity. He, indeed, whoſe free and independent ſpirit is reſolved to permit his mind to think for itſelf, who diſdains to form his feelings, and to faſhion his opinions, upon the capricious notions of the world; who is too candid to expect that others ſhould be guided by his notions, and ſufficiently firm not to obey implicitly the haſty notions of others; who ſeeks to culti-

is common for a man who feels pain, to fancy he could bear it better in any other part. COWLEY, having known the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily perſuaded himſelf, that nothing worſe was to be found, and that every alteration would bring ſome improvement: he never ſuſpected that the cauſes of his unhappineſs were within; that his own paſſions were not ſufficiently regulated; and that he was harraſſed by his own impatience, which could never be without ſomething to awaken it, but would accompany him over the ſea, and find its way to the American elyſium. He would, upon the trial, have been ſoon convinced, that the fountain of CONTENT muſt ſpring up in the mind; and that he who has ſo little knowledge of human nature, as to ſeek happineſs by changing any thing but his own diſpoſition, will waſte his life in fruitleſs efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purpoſes to remove."

vate the juſt and manly feelings of the heart, and to purſue TRUTH in the paths of ſcience, muſt detach himſelf from the degenerate crowd, and ſeek his enjoyments in Retirement. * For to thoſe who love to conſult their own ideas, to form opinions upon their own reaſonings and diſcernment, and to expreſs only ſuch ſentiments as they really feel, a ſociety whoſe judgments are borrowed, whoſe literature is only ſpecious, and whoſe principles are unfounded, muſt not only be irkſomely inſipid, but morally dangerous. The firm and noble-minded diſdain to bow their necks to the ſlaviſh yoke of vulgar prejudice, and appeal, in ſupport of their opinions, to the higher tribunal of ſenſe and reaſon, from the partial and ill-formed ſentences of conceited critics, who, deſtitute themſelves of any ſterling merit, endeavour to depreciate the value of that coin whoſe weight and purity render it current, and to ſubſtitute their own baſe and varniſhed compoſitions

* It is ſaid by a celebrated French writer of the old ſchool, "That there is a neceſſity for men either to imitate others or to hate them; but that both of them ought to be avoided by OCCASIONAL RETIREMENT: that a wiſe man, although he is enabled to live every where with content, and to be retired even amidſt the crowd of a palace, will, if left to his own choice, fly from the very ſight of the court, and ſeek a happy SOLITUDE; for that, however able he may be to endure, if need be, the corruptions of the world, he will not think himſelf ſufficiently rid of vice, while he has to contend with it in other men."

poſitions in its ſtead. Thoſe ſelf-created wits, who proudly place themſelves in the profeſſor's chair, look with an envious and malignant eye on all the works of genius, taſte, and ſenſe; and as their intereſts are intimately blended with the deſtruction of every ſublime and elegant production, their cries are raiſed againſt them the moment they appear. To blaſt the fame of merit is their chief object and their higheſt joy; and their lives are induſtriouſly employed to ſtifle the diſcoveries, to impede the advancement, to condemn the excellency, and to pervert the meaning of their more ingenious contemporaries. Like loathſome toads, they grovel on the ground, and, as they move along, emit a naſty ſlime or frothy venom on the ſweeteſt ſhrubs and faireſt flowers of the fields.

From the ſociety of ſuch characters, who ſeem to conſider the noble productions of ſuperior intellect, the fine and vigorous flights of fancy, the brilliant effuſions of a ſublime imagination, and the refined feelings of the heart, as fancied conceits or wild deliriums, thoſe who examine them by a better ſtandard than that of faſhion or common taſte fly with delight.

The reign of envy, however, although it is perpetual as to the exiſtence of the paſſion, is

only tranſitory as to the objects of its tyranny; and the merit which has fallen the victim of its rage, is frequently raiſed by the hand of Truth, and placed on the throne of public applauſe. A production of genius, however the ears of its author were deafened, during his life, by the clamours of calumny, and hiſſes of ignorance, is reviewed with impartiality when he dies, and revived by the acclamations of ingenuous applauſe. The reproach which the life of a great and good man is continually caſting on his mean and degenerate contemporaries, is ſilenced by his death. He is remembered only in the character of his works; and his fame increaſes with the ſucceſſive generations, which his ſentiments and opinions contribute to enlighten and adorn.

Envy will merit as its ſhade purſue;
But like a ſhadow proves the ſubſtance true:
For envy'd wit, like Sol eclips'd, makes known
The oppoſing body's greatneſs, not its own.
When firſt that ſun too powerful beams diſplays,
It draws up vapours which obſcure its rays;
But e'en thoſe clouds at laſt adorn its way,
Reflect new glories, and augment the day.

The hiſtory of the celebrated Engliſh philoſopher DAVID HUME,* affords, perhaps, a ſtronger

* HUME was born on the 26th of April, 1711, at *Edinburgh*; of a good family, both by father and mother. His father's

ſtronger inſtance of the dangers to which wit and learning are expoſed from the malicious ſhafts of envy, ignorance, and intolerance, than that of any other author. The tax, indeed, is common to authors of every deſcription, but it frequently falls the heavieſt on the higheſt heads. This profound philoſopher, and elegant hiſtorian, poſſeſſed a mild temper; a lively, ſocial diſpoſition; a high ſenſe of friendſhip, and an incorruptible integrity. His manners, indeed, appeared, at firſt ſight, cold and repulſive; for

father's family were a branch of the *Earl of Home's* or *Hume's*; and his elder brother was in poſſeſſion of the family eſtate. His mother was the daughter of *Sir David Falconer*, Preſident of the College of Juſtice, whoſe ſon ſucceeded to the title of *Lord Halkertin*. His family, however, was not rich; and he being a younger brother, his patrimony, according to the mode of his country, was of courſe very ſlender. His father, who paſſed for a man of parts, died when he was an infant, leaving him, with an elder brother and a ſiſter, under the care of their mother, a woman of ſingular merit, who, though young and handſome, devoted herſelf entirely to the rearing and educating of her children. "I paſſed," ſays HUME, in the account he has given of his own life, "through the ordinary courſe of education with ſucceſs, and was ſeized very early with a paſſion for literature, which has been the ruling paſſion of my life, and the great ſource of my enjoyments. My ſtudious diſpoſition, my ſobriety, and my induſtry, gave my family a notion that THE LAW were a proper profeſſion for me; but I found an inſurmountable averſion to every thing but the purſuits of philoſophy and general learning; and while they fancied I was poring over *Voet* and *Vinnius*, CICERO and VIRGIL were the authors which I was ſecretly devouring."

he had ſacrificed little to the Graces; but his mind was unvaryingly chearful, and his affection uncommonly warm and generous; and neither his ardent deſire of fame, nor the groſs and unfounded calumnies of his enemies, were capable of diſturbing the happy tranquillity of his heart. His life was paſſed in the conſtant exerciſe of humanity and benevolence; and even thoſe who had been ſeduced, by the jealous and vindictive artifices of others, wantonly to attack his fame and character with obloquy and reproach, experienced his kindneſs, and acknowledged his virtues. He would never, indeed, confeſs that his friends had ever had occaſion to vindicate any one circumſtance of his character or conduct, or that he had ever been attacked either by the baleful tooth of envy, or the rage of civil or religious faction. His company, indeed, was equally agreeable to all the claſſes of ſociety; and young and old, rich and poor, liſtened with pleaſure to his converſation, and quitted his company with regret; for, although he was deeply learned, and his diſcourſes replete with ſagacity and ſcience, he had the happy art of delivering his ſentiments upon all ſubjects without the appearance of oſtentation, or in any way offending the feelings of his hearers.

The intereſts of Religion are ſaid to have ſuffered by the abuſe of his talents; but the precepts

cepts of Chriſtianity were never more powerfully recommended, than by the integrity of his morals, and the purity of his life. His benign and gentle ſpirit, attached to VIRTUE, and averſe from every ſpecies of VICE, eſſentially promoted the practice of piety, and the duties of a religious mind; and did not, as is always the caſe with the zeal of perſecution and martyrdom, tear away the very foundation of that fabric which it pretends to ſupport. The excellency, indeed, both of the head and the heart of this great and good man, enabled him not only to enjoy himſelf with perfect felicity, but to contribute to the improvement and increaſe the happineſs of mankind. This is the opinion now generally entertained of the character of HUME; but far different were the ſentiments of his contemporaries upon this ſubject. It was not either in a barbarous country, or in an unenlightened age, that he lived; but, although the land was free, the people philoſophical, and the ſpirit of the times provoked the minds of learned men to metaphyſical enquiry, the fame of HUME was wrecked upon his moral and religious writings. He was charged with being a SCEPTIC;* but from the propa-

* The animoſity which prevailed againſt this elegant writer ſcarcely outlived him. He died in the year 1776; and at that period, we find the following converſation recorded relative to

gation of certain doctrines, and the freedom of enquiry which had then gone forth, it is impoſſible to attribute his diſappointments to this cauſe. A kind

to this ſubject. Dr. ADAMS, who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by an able anſwer to HUME's "*Eſſay on Miracles*," told Mr. BOSWELL, that he had once dined in company with HUME in *London*; that HUME ſhook hands with him, and ſaid, "You have treated me much better than I deſerve;" and that they exchanged viſits: that Mr. BOSWELL thereupon objected to treating an infidel with ſuch ſmooth civility, obſerving, that where there is a controverſy concerning a paſſage in a claſſic author, or concerning a queſtion in antiquities, or any other ſubject in which human happineſs is not deeply intereſted, a man may treat his antagoniſt with politeneſs and reſpect; but where the controverſy is concerning the truth of RELIGION, it is of ſuch vaſt importance to him who maintains it to obtain the victory, that *the perſon* of an opponent ought not to be ſpared. If a man firmly believes that Religion is an invaluable treaſure, he will conſider a writer who endeavours to deprive mankind of it as a *robber*; he will look upon him as *odious*, though *the infidel* might think himſelf in the right. A robber who reaſons as *the gang* do in the Beggars' Opera, who call themſelves practical philoſophers, and may have as much ſincerity as pernicious ſpeculative philoſophers, is not the leſs an object of juſt indignation." Mr. PALEY, who, in his *View of the Evidences of Chriſtianity*, has attacked, and compleatly expoſed, the *falſe principles* by which the mind of HUME was miſled upon this important ſubject, treats his antagoniſt with candour and liberality, while he ſubdues him with the ſuperior powers of truth, and thereby more effectually defeats the ill effects which may flow from ſuch unfounded doctrines, than if he had, in the language of the biographer above alluded to, talked of "kicking him down ſtairs," or "running him through the body."

A kind of natural prejudice, indeed, prevailed in *England* at this period againſt the *Scots*; but as he did not experience much favour from his own countrymen, no concluſion can be fairly drawn from this circumſtance; and the extraordinary *Hiſtory of his Literary Tranſactions*, a work written by himſelf, cannot be peruſed without an equal degree of ſurprize and concern. The contemptuous repulſes which his ſeveral compoſitions received from the public appear incredible; but the facts he relates are undoubtedly authentic; and while they raiſe a ſorrowful regret for the fate of HUME in particular, they muſt unhappily tend to diminiſh the ardour of the ſtudent who contemplates the various dangers to which his deſire of fame is expoſed, and may, perhaps, induce him to quit the purſuit of an object "So hard to gain, ſo eaſy to be loſt."

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The ſteep where FAME's proud temple ſhines afar;
Ah! who can tell how many a ſoul ſublime
Has felt the influence of malignant ſtar,
And wag'd with Fortune an eternal war;
Check'd by the ſcoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pin'd alone,
Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown!

The health of this diſappointed author being in a great degree broken by his too ardent purſuit

of literature, he went, on the close of the year 1734, to FRANCE, with a view to prosecute his studies in a country retreat, and to be the better enabled to observe that rigid frugality which the deficiency of his fortune, and his love of independence required. During this retreat, which was first at *Rheims*, but chiefly at *La Fleche*, in *Anjou*, he composed his *Treatise on Human Nature*; and, after an absence of three years in this agreeable solitude, returned to *London*, for the purpose of publishing the work; but, to use his own expression, "never literary attempt "was more unfortunate than the publication of "this treatise. It fell *dead-born from the press*, "without reaching such distinction as even to "excite a murmur among the zealots: but being "naturally of a cheerful and sanguine temper, "I very soon recovered the blow." He entertained a notion that his want of success in publishing this work, had proceeded more from the *manner* than the *matter*, and that he had been guilty of the usual indiscretion of young authors, in going to the press too early. He therefore cast the first part of that work anew, and introduced it into his *Enquiry concerning the Understanding*, which was published about ten years afterwards, while he was at *Turin*; but this piece was at first little more successful than the *Treatise on Human Nature*; and, on his return to *England*, he

he had the mortification to find the whole country in a ferment on account of Dr. MIDDLETON's *Free Enquiry*, while his performance was entirely overlooked and neglected. A new edition of his *Eſſays Moral and Political* met with little better reception. In the year 1749 he retired from *London* to the houſe of his brother in the country, where, during a reſidence of two years, he compoſed the ſecond part of an Eſſay which he called *Political Diſcourſes*, and alſo his *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, which was the other part of his *Treatiſe on Human Nature* caſt anew; and he flattered himſelf, from the accounts he received from his bookſeller, and from the railings of Dr. WARBURTON, that his works were beginning to be eſteemed in good company. Encouraged by theſe ſymptoms of a riſing reputation, he publiſhed in the year 1752, at *Edinburgh*, where he then lived, his *Political Diſcourſes*, which met with ſome ſucceſs; but, on publiſhing, in the ſame year, at *London*, his *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, which, in his own opinion, was, of all his writings, hiſtorical, philoſophical, or literary, incomparably the beſt, it came, to uſe his own words, "unnoticed and unobſerved into the world." In the year 1752 the Faculty of Advocates choſe him their librarian; an office from which he received little or no emolument,

emolument, but which gave him the command of a large library. He formed about this period the plan of writing THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND; but being frightened with the notion of continuing a narrative through a period of seventeen hundred years, he commenced with the acceſſion of the *Houſe of Stuart*; an epoch when he thought the miſrepreſentation of faction began chiefly to take place; and he acknowledges that he was extremely ſanguine in his expectations of the ſucceſs of this work. "I thought," ſays he, "that I was the only hiſtorian that had "at once neglected preſent power, intereſt, and "authority, and the cry of popular prejudices; "and as the ſubject was ſuited to every capacity, "I expected proportional applauſe: but, miſera-"ble was my diſappointment: I was aſſailed by "one cry of reproach, diſapprobation, and even "deteſtation. Engliſh, Scotch, and Iriſh, whig "and tory, churchman and ſectary, freethinker "and religioniſt, patriot and courtier, united "in their rage againſt the man who had pre-"ſumed to ſhed a generous tear for the fate "of CHARLES THE FIRST, and the EARL "OF STRAFFORD; and after the firſt ebulli-"tions of their fury were over, what was ſtill "more mortifying, the book ſeemed to ſink into "oblivion. Mr. MILLAR told me that in a "twelvemonth he ſold only forty-five copies of "it.

" it. I ſcarcely, indeed, heard of one man in " the three kingdoms, conſiderable for rank or " letters, that could endure the book. I muſt " only except the primate of *England*, Dr. HERRING, and the primate of *Ireland*, Dr. STONE, " which ſeem two odd exceptions. Theſe dignified prelates ſeparately ſent me meſſages not to " be diſcouraged. I was, however, I confeſs, " diſcouraged; and had not the war at that time " been breaking out between *France* and *England*, I had certainly retired to ſome provincial " town of the former kingdom, have changed " my name, and never more have returned to " my native country. But as this ſcheme was " not now practicable, and the ſubſequent volume was conſiderably advanced, I reſolved to " pick up courage, and to perſevere." During this interval he publiſhed at *London* his *Natural Hiſtory of Religion*, along with ſome other ſmall pieces; but its public entry was rather obſcure, except only that Dr. HURD wrote a pamphlet againſt it, with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance, and ſcurrility of the *Warburtonian* ſchool. In 1756, two years after *the fall* of the firſt volume, was publiſhed the ſecond volume of his Hiſtory, containing the period from the death of CHARLES THE FIRST till THE REVOLUTION. This performance happened to give leſs diſpleaſure to the *whigs*, and was better

better received. It not only roſe itſelf, but helped to buoy up its unfortunate brother. "But "though," adds Mr. HUME, "I had been "taught by experience that the whig party were "in poſſeſſion of beſtowing all places, both in "the ſtate and in literature, I even ſo little "inclined to yield to their *ſenſeleſs clamours*, that "in above a hundred alterations, which farther "ſtudy, reading, or recollection, engaged me "to make in the reigns of the two firſt Stuarts, "I made all of them invariably to *the tory* "ſide." In the year 1759 he publiſhed his *Hiſtory of the Houſe of Tudor*; but the clamour againſt this performance was almoſt equal to that againſt the Hiſtory of the two firſt STUARTS. The reign of ELIZABETH was particularly obnoxious. But he was now callous againſt the impreſſion of *public folly*, and continued very peaceably and contentedly in his retreat at *Edinburgh*, to finiſh, in two volumes, the more early part of the Engliſh Hiſtory, which he gave to the public in 1761, with tolerable, and with but tolerable, ſucceſs. *

This

* The writings of HUME, however, notwithſtanding the variety of winds and ſeaſons to which they were expoſed, made ſuch advances, that the copy-money given him by the booksellers much exceeded any thing before known in *England*, and rendered him not only independent, but opulent. "I retired," ſays he, in the little memoir from which the greateſt part of the above

This is the melancholy hiſtory of the literary career of the celebrated HUME, as appears from the

above account is taken, " to my native country of *Scotland*, " determined never more to ſet my foot out of it; and retain- " ing the ſatisfaction of never having preferred a requeſt to one " GREAT MAN, or ever making advances of friendſhip to any " of them." He was now more than fifty years of age, and, thought of paſſing all the reſt of his life in this philoſophical manner, when, in the year 1763, he received an invitation from the *Earl of Hertford*, with whom he was not in the leaſt acquainted, to attend him on his embaſſy to PARIS, with a near proſpect of being appointed ſecretary to the embaſſy, and in the mean while of performing the functions of that office. After ſome heſitation, and repeated ſolicitation from the Earl, he accepted the offer, and the appointment of ſecretary. He continued at PARIS until the beginning of the year 1766, and ſeems to have been by no means diſpleaſed with his reception there. " Thoſe," ſays he, " who have not ſeen the ſtrange effects of " modes, will never imagine the reception I met with at PA- " RIS, from men and women of all ranks and ſtations: the " more I reſiled from their exceſſive civilities, the more I was " loaded with them. There is, however, a real ſatisfaction in " living at PARIS, from the great number of ſenſible, know- " ing, and polite perſons with which that city abounds above " all places in the univerſe." In 1767 he accepted the office of under ſecretary to Mr. CONWAY; and returned to *Edinburgh*, in 1769, poſſeſſed of a revenue of £.1000 a year, good health, high ſpirits, and the proſpect of enjoying eaſe as his reputation increaſed; but in the ſpring of the year 1775 he was ſtruck with a diſorder in his bowels which was incurable; and he expired on Sunday, the 25th of Auguſt, 1776. His character is thus drawn by his friend Dr. ADAM SMITH. " Thus died our moſt excellent and never-to-be-forgotten friend, concerning whoſe philoſophical

the ſhort ſketch he made of *his own life*, while he calmly waited under an incurable diſorder the moment of approaching diſſolution; a work which proclaims the mildneſs, the modeſty, and the

philoſophical writings men will no doubt judge variouſly, every one approving or condemning them according as they happen to coincide or diſagree with his own; but concerning whoſe character and conduct there can ſcarce be a difference of opinion. His temper, indeed, ſeemed to be more happily balanced, if I may be allowed ſuch an expreſſion, than that, perhaps, of any other man I have ever known. Even in the loweſt ſtate of his fortune, his great and neceſſary frugality never hindered him from exerciſing, upon proper occaſions, acts both of charity and generoſity. It was not a frugality founded upon avarice, but upon the love of independency. The extreme gentleneſs of his nature never weakened either the firmneſs of his mind, or the ſteadineſs of his reſolutions. His conſtant pleaſantry, ever the genuine effuſion of good nature and good humour, tempered with delicacy and modeſty, was without even the ſlighteſt tincture of malignity, ſo frequently the diſagreeable ſource of what is called WIT in other men. It never was the meaning of his raillery to mortify; and therefore, far from offending, it ſeldom failed to pleaſe and delight thoſe who were the objects of it. To his friends, who were frequently the objects of it, there was not, perhaps, any one of all his great and amiable qualities which contributed more to endear his converſation: and that gaiety of temper ſo agreeable in ſociety, but which is ſo often accompanied with frivolous and ſuperficial qualities, was in him certainly attended with the moſt ſevere application, the moſt extenſive learning, the greateſt depth of thought, and a capacity in every reſpect the moſt comprehenſive. Upon the whole, I have always conſidered him, both in his life-time and ſince his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wiſe and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit."

the reſignation of his temper, as clearly as his other works demonſtrate the power and extent of his mind. The hiſtory, indeed, of every man who attempts to deſtroy the reigning prejudices, or correct the prevailing errors, of his age and country, is nearly the ſame. He who has the happineſs to ſee objects of any deſcription with greater perſpicacity than his contemporaries, and preſumes to diſſeminate his ſuperior knowledge by the unreſerved publication of his opinions, ſets himſelf up as a common mark for the ſhafts of envy and reſentment to pierce, and ſeldom eſcapes from being charged with wicked deſigns againſt the intereſts of mankind. A writer, whatever his character, ſtation, or talents may be, will find that he has a hoſt of malevolent inferiors ready to ſeize every opportunity of gratifying their humbled pride, by attempting to level his ſuperior merits and ſubdue his riſing fame. Even the compaſſionate few, who are ever ready to furniſh food to the hungry, cloathing to the naked, and conſolation to the afflicted, ſeldom feel any other ſenſation than that of jealouſy, on beholding the wreath of merit placed on the brows of a deſerving rival. The EPHESIANS, with republican pride, being unable to endure the reproach which they felt from the pre-eminency of any individual, baniſhed to ſome other ſtate the citizen who preſumed to excel the generality of his

his countrymen. It would be in ſome meaſure adopting this egregious and tyrannical folly, were I to exhort the man whoſe merits tranſcend thoſe who are his equal in rank or ſtation, to break off all intercourſe and connection with them; but I am certain that he might, by an occaſional retirement, elude the effects of their envy, and avoid thoſe provocations, to which, by his ſuperiority, he will otherwiſe be continually expoſed.

To treat the frailties of our fellow-creatures with tenderneſs, to correct their errors with kindneſs, to view even their vices with pity, and to induce, by every friendly attention, a mutual complacency and good will, is not only an important moral duty, but a means of increaſing the ſum of earthly happineſs. It is, indeed, difficult to prevent an honeſt mind from burſting forth with generous indignation againſt thoſe artful hypocrites, who, by ſpecious and plauſible practices, obtain the falſe character of being wiſe and good, and obtrude their flimſy and heterodox opinions upon the unthinking world, as the fair and genuine ſentiments of TRUTH and VIRTUE. The anger which ariſes in a generous and ardent mind, on hearing a noble action calumniated, or a uſeful work illiberally attacked, is not eaſily reſtrained; but ſuch feelings ſhould be checked

and

and regulated with a greater degree of caution than even if they were leſs virtuous and praiſe-worthy; for if they are indulged with frequency, their natural violence may weaken the common charities of the mind, and convert its very goodneſs and love of virtue into a mournful miſ-anthropy, or virulent deteſtation of mankind.

The precepts here of a divine old man
I could recite. Tho' old, he ſtill retain'd
His manly ſenſe, and energy of mind.
Virtuous and wiſe he was, but not *ſevere*;
He ſtill remembered that he once was young;
His eaſy preſence check'd no decent joy.
Him ev'n the *diſſolute* admir'd; for he
A graceful looſeneſs, when he pleas'd, put on,
And laughing, could inſtruct. Much had he read,
Much more had ſeen: he ſtudied from the life,
And in th' original perus'd mankind.
Vers'd in the woes and vanities of life,
He pitied MAN. Of right and wrong he taught
Truths as refin'd as ever ATHENS heard;
And, ſtrange to tell! he practis'd what he preach'd.
Skill'd in THE PASSIONS, how to check their ſway
He knew, as far as REASON can controul
The lawleſs powers.

Let not the MAN whoſe exalted mind, improved by ſtudy and obſervation, ſurveys with a diſcriminating eye the moral depravities and mental weakneſſes of human nature, ſubmit to treat his envious inferiors with inveterate anger, and undiſtinguiſhing revenge. Their envy

envy is a tribute of approbation to his greatneſs. Let him look with the gentle eye of pity upon thoſe who err rather from the wicked ſuggeſtions of others than from the malevolence of their own hearts: let him not confound the weak and innocent reptile with the ſcorpion and the viper: let him liſten without emotion to the malignant barkings and envious hiſſings that every where attend the footſteps of tranſcendant merit: let him diſregard with philoſophic dignity the ſenſeleſs clamours of thoſe noiſy adverſaries who are blinded by prejudice, and deaf to the arguments of ſenſe and reaſon: let him rather, by a mild and forbearing temper, endeavour to make ſome impreſſion on their hearts; and if he ſhould find their boſoms ſuſceptible, he may hope in time to convince them of their errors, and, without violence or compulſion, bring back their deluded underſtandings to a ſenſe of TRUTH, and the practice of VIRTUE: but if experience convince him that every endeavour to reform them is fruitleſs and vain, let him

Neglect the grumblers of an envious age,
Vapid in ſpleen, or briſk in frothy rage;
Critics, who, ere they underſtand, defame;
And ſeeming friends, who only do not blame;
And puppet prattlers, whoſe unconſcious throat
Tranſmits what the pert witling prompts by rote:
Let him neglect this blind and babbling crowd,
To enjoy the favour of the WISE and GOOD.

Slander, however, by fixing her talons on the moſt virtuous characters, generally defeats her own malice, and proclaims their merit. It may, indeed, tend to diminiſh their inclination for general ſociety, and to render them in ſome degree apprehenſive of the danger of even well-deſerved fame. "Durable fame," ſays PETRARCH, "is only to be derived from the practice of virtue, and from ſuch works as are worthy of deſcending from generation to generation. As to praters, gowned gentlemen that walk in their ſilks, glitter in their jewels, and are pointed at by the people, all their bravery and pomp, their ſhew of knowledge, and their thundering ſpeeches, laſt only with their lungs, and then vaniſh into thin ſmoke; for the acquiſition of wealth, and the deſires of ambition, are no witneſſes of true deſert. I think I ſhall have fame after my death; and that is a fame from which no profit is derived; but, on the contrary, frequently injures while alive the perſon who is to enjoy it when dead. What procured the deſtruction of CICERO, DEMOSTHENES, and ZENO, but foul and haggard envy of their fame? What brought the choſen men of the great ſhip ARGOS to COLCHIS, but the fame of that king's riches? For what elſe was ſignified by the *Golden Fleece*, but the riches ſeized by theſe marauders, deſtitute of true riches, and who were clad with fleeces not their own?"

Many,

Many, indeed, whoſe merits have caſt a radiance round their characters, have hidden its ſplendors within the ſhades of retirement, to avoid giving uneaſineſs to envy; and, by being deprived of that warm and inſpiring tribute of applauſe which they had gloriouſly and juſtly earned, have, in ſome inſtances at leaſt, indulged too keen a ſenſe of the depravity of mankind. SOLON, after having in vain exhorted the Athenians to reſiſt the tyranny of PISISTRATUS, and ſave the liberties of that country on which he had conferred ſuch diſtinguiſhed ſervices, returned to his own houſe, and placing his weapons at the ſtreet door, exclaimed, as a laſt effort, "*I have done all in my power to ſave my country, and defend its law*;" and then retired from the tumults of public life, to weep in ſilence over the ſervility of the Athenians, and the fate of ATHENS.* Hiſtory affords many illuſtrious inſtances, both ancient and modern,

* "It would," ſaid SOLON, "have been much eaſier for the Athenians to repreſs the advances of tyranny, and prevent its eſtabliſhment; but now that it is eſtabliſhed, and grown to ſome height, it would be the more glorious to demoliſh it." His friends, alarmed by the dangers to which he expoſed himſelf by theſe obſervations, told him that the tyrant would certainly put him to death; and aſked him what he truſted to when he went ſuch imprudent lengths. He anſwered, "*To Old Age.*" PISISTRATUS, however, when he had fully eſtabliſhed himſelf, made his court to SOLON, and treated him with ſo much kindneſs and reſpect, that he became, as it were, his counſellor, and gave ſanction to many of his proceedings.

modern, of the like kind; for there never was a ſtateſman who poſſeſſed a great mind, and manly feelings, that did not, even during the plenitude of his power, occaſionally wiſh to eſcape from the incorrigible vices which prevail in courts, to the enjoyment of the more innocent pleaſures and humble virtues which ſurround the cottage. Such exalted characters cannot obſerve, without the higheſt diſguſt, and keeneſt indignation, the virtues of the beſt, and the ſervices of the braveſt, men of the nation, blaſted by the envious breath of brainleſs placemen, or the inſidious inſinuations of female favourites, whoſe whole time is employed in careſſing their monkies and parroquets, or in aſperſing the merits of thoſe who boldly ſeek their fortune by the open and manly road of true deſert, and not by the deep, dark and crooked paths of flattery and intrigue. Can ſuch a man behold the double dealing and deceitful artifices by which the excellency of princes is corrupted, their imaginations dazzled, their diſcernment blinded, and their minds led aſtray, without feeling uncommon indignation? Certainly not. But however acutely his boſom may feel, or his tongue expreſs, his ſenſe of ſuch prevailing practices, he muſt ſtill be forced to ſee, with even a more contemptuous and painful ſenſation, that envious rage, and jealous aſperity, which burſt from the cringing crowd of mean and abject cour-

tiers, on hearing the monarch, in the grateful feelings of his heart, applaud the eminent and faithful ſervices of ſome gallant officer. DION was the principal ſtateſman at the court of DIONYSIUS, and the deliverer of *Sicily*. When the younger DIONYSIUS ſucceeded to the throne of his father, DION, in the firſt council that he held, ſpoke with ſo much propriety on the exiſting ſtate of affairs, and on the meaſures which ought to be taken, that the ſurrounding courtiers appeared to be mere children in compariſon. By the freedom of his councils he expoſed in a ſtrong light the ſlaviſh principles of thoſe, who, through a timorous diſingenuity, adviſed ſuch meaſures as they thought would pleaſe their prince, rather than ſuch as might advance his intereſt. But what alarmed them moſt were the ſteps he propoſed to take with regard to the impending war with CARTHAGE; for he offered either to go in perſon to CARTHAGE, and ſettle an honourable peace with the *Carthaginians*, or, if war ſhould be inevitable, to fit out and maintain fifty gallies at his own expence. DIONYSIUS was pleaſed with the magnificence of his ſpirit; but the courtiers felt that it made them appear little; and agreeing that, at all events, DION was to be cruſhed, they ſpared, for that purpoſe, no calumny that malice could ſuggeſt. They repreſented to the king, that this favourite certainly meant to make himſelf

maſter

maſter by ſea, and by that means to obtain the kingdom for his ſiſter's children. There was, moreover, another and an obvious cauſe of their hatred to him, in the reſerve of his manners and the ſobriety of his life. They led the young and ill-educated king through every ſpecies of debauchery, and were the ſhameleſs panders of his wrong-directed paſſions. Their enmity to DION, who had no taſte for luxurious enjoyments, was a thing of courſe; and as he refuſed to partake with them in their vices, they reſolved to ſtrip him of his virtues; to which they gave the name of thoſe vices as are ſuppoſed to reſemble them. His gravity of manners they called pride; his freedom of ſpeech, inſolence; his declining to join in their licentiouſneſs, contempt. It is true there was a natural haughtineſs in his deportment, and an aſperity that was unſociable, and difficult of acceſs; ſo that it is not to be wondered if he found no ready admiſſion to the ears of a young king already ſpoiled by flattery. Willing to impute the irregularities of DIONYSIUS to ignorance and a bad education, DION endeavoured to engage him in a courſe of liberal ſtudies, and to give him a taſte for thoſe ſciences which have a tendency to moral improvement. But in this wiſe and virtuous reſolution he was oppoſed by all the artifices of court intrigue.

Men, in proportion as their minds are dignified with noble ſentiments, and their hearts ſuſceptible of refined ſenſibility, feel a juſtifiable averſion to the ſociety of ſuch characters, and ſhrink from the ſcenes they frequent; but they ſhould cautiouſly guard againſt the intruſion of that auſterity and moroſeneſs with which ſuch a conduct is but too apt to inſpire the moſt benevolent minds. Diſguſted by the vices and follies of the age, the mind becomes inſenſibly impreſſed with a hatred toward the ſpecies, and loſes, by degrees, that mild and humane temper which is ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary to the enjoyment of ſocial happineſs. Even he who merely obſerves the weak or vicious frailties of his fellow creatures with an intention to ſtudy philoſophically the nature and diſpoſition of MAN, cannot avoid remembering their defects without ſeverity, and viewing the character he contemplates with contempt, eſpecially if he happens to be the object of their artifices, and the dupe of their villanies. Contempt is cloſely allied with hatred; and hatred of mankind will corrupt, in time, the faireſt mind: it tinges, by degrees, every object with the bile of miſanthropy; perverts the judgment; and at length looks indiſcriminately with an evil eye on the good and bad; engenders ſuſpicion, fear, jealouſy, revenge, and all the black catalogue of unworthy and malignant

nant paſſions: and when theſe dreadful enemies have extirpated every generous ſentiment from the breaſt, the unhappy victim abhors ſociety, diſclaims his ſpecies, ſighs, like ST. HYACINTH, for ſome diſtant and ſecluded iſland, and, with ſavage barbarity, defends the inviolability of its boundaries by the cruel repulſion, and, perhaps, the death, of thoſe unhappy mortals whom misfortune may drive, helpleſs and unpitied, to its inhoſpitable ſhores.*

* The danger of extirpating every kind and benevolent ſentiment of the mind, and of corrupting every tender and humane feeling of the heart, by inordinately indulging an antipathy to mankind, is finely deſcribed by SHAKESPEARE in the horrid invectives he has put into the mouth of the too generous TIMON, who had ſought that ſhelter and ſupport from the Athenian woods, which had been denied to him by the baſeneſs of thoſe friends whom his former bounty had fed, and in whoſe company he had, by an indiſcreet liberality, met his ruin.

" Let me look back upon thee, O, thou wall
That girdeſt in thoſe wolves! Dive in the earth,
And fence not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent;
Obedience, fail in children; ſlaves and fools,
Pluck the grave wrinkled ſenate from the bench,
And miniſter in their ſteads. To general filth
Convert i'th' inſtant green virginity!
Do it in your parents' eyes. Bankrupts, hold faſt;
Rather than render back, out with your knives,
And cut your maſters' throats. Bound ſervants, ſteal;
Large handed robbers your grave maſters are,
And pill by law.—Son of ſixteen,

Pluck

But if miſanthropy be capable of producing ſuch direful effects on well-diſpoſed minds, how ſhocking muſt be the character whoſe diſpoſition, naturally rancorous, is heightened and inflamed by an habitual hatred and malignancy towards his fellow creatures! In *Swiſſerland* I once beheld a monſter of this deſcription: I was compelled

Pluck the lin'd crutch from thy old limping ſire;
With it beat out his brains. Fear and piety,
Religion to the gods, peace, juſtice, truth,
Domeſtic awe, night reſt, and neighbourhood,
Inſtruction, manners, myſteries, and trades,
Decline to your confounding contraries,
And let confuſion live! Plagues incident to men,
Your potent and infectious fevers heap
On Athens, ripe for ſtroke! Thou cold ſciatica,
Cripple our ſenators, that their limbs may halt
As lamely as their manners. Luſt and licence,
Creep in the minds and manners of our youth,
That 'gainſt the ſtream of virtue they may ſtrive,
And drown themſelves in riot! Itches and blains
Sore all the Athenian boſoms; and their crops
Be general leproſy. Breath infect breath,
That their ſociety, like their friendſhip, may
Be merely poiſon. Nothing will I bear from thee
But nakedneſs, thou deteſtable town!
Take thou that too with multiplying banns.
TIMON will to the woods, where he ſhall find
The unkindeſt beaſt much kinder than mankind.
The gods confound, oh, hear me good gods all,
The Athenians both within and out the wall;
And grant, as TIMON grows, his hate may grow
To the whole race of mankind, high and low."

pelled to viſit him by the duties of my profeſſion; but I ſhudder while I recollect the enormity of his character. His body was almoſt as deformed as his mind. Enmity was ſeated on his diſtorted brow. Scales of livid incruſtation, the joint produce of his corrupted body and diſtempered mind, covered his face. His horrid figure made me fancy that I ſaw Meduſa's ſerpents wreathing their baleful folds among the black and matted locks of his diſhevelled hair; while his red and fiery eyes glared like malignant meteors through the obſcurity of his impending eye-brows. Miſchief was his ſole delight, his greateſt luxury, and his higheſt joy. To ſow diſcord among his neighbours, and to tear open the cloſing wounds of miſery, was his only occupation. His reſidence was the reſort of the diſorderly, the receptacle of the vicious, and the aſylum of the guilty. Collecting around him the turbulent and diſcontented of every deſcription, he became the patron of injuſtice, the perſecutor of virtue, the protector of villainy, the perpetrator of malice, the inventor of fraud, the propagator of calumny, and the zealous champion of cruelty and revenge; directing, with malignant aim, the barbed ſhafts of his adherents equally againſt the comforts of private peace and the bleſſings of public tranquillity. The bent and inclination of his nature had been ſo aggravated and confirmed

by the "multiplying villanies of his life," that it was impoſſible for him to refrain one moment from the practice of them, without feeling uneaſineſs and diſcontent; and he never appeared perfectly happy, but when new opportunities occurred to glut his infernal ſoul with the ſpectacle of human miſeries.

The TIMON of *Lucian* was in ſome meaſure excuſable for his exceſſive hatred to mankind, by the unparalleled wrongs they had heaped upon him. The inexorable antipathy he entertained againſt his ſpecies, had been provoked by injuries almoſt too great for the common fortitude of humanity to endure. His probity, humanity, and charity to the poor, had been the ruin of him; or rather his own folly, eaſineſs of diſpoſition, and want of judgment in his choice of friends. He never diſcovered that he was giving away his all to wolves and ravens. Whilſt theſe vultures were preying on his liver, he thought them his beſt friends, and that they fed upon him out of pure love and affection. After they had gnawed him all round, ate his bones bare, and, whilſt there was any marrow in them, ſucked it carefully out, they left him cut down to the roots and withered; and, ſo far from relieving him, or aſſiſting him in their turns, would not ſo much as know or look upon him. This made him

him turn a common labourer; and, dreſſed in his ſkin garment, he tilled the earth for hire; aſhamed to ſhew himſelf in the city, and venting his rage againſt the ingratitude of thoſe, who, enriched, as they had been, by him, now proudly paſſed along without noticing him. But although ſuch a character is not to be deſpiſed or neglected, no provocation, however great, can juſtify the violent and exceſſive invectives which he profanely bellowed forth from the bottom of HYMETTUS: "This ſpot of earth ſhall "be my only habitation while I live; and, "when I am dead, my ſepulchre. From this time "forth, it is my fixed reſolution to have no "commerce or connection with mankind; but "to deſpiſe them, and avoid it. I will pay no "regard to acquaintance, friendſhip, pity, or "compaſſion. To pity the diſtreſſed, or to re-"lieve the indigent, I ſhall conſider as a weak-"neſs; nay, as a crime: my life, like that of "the beaſts of the field, ſhall be ſpent in ſoli-"tude; and TIMON alone ſhall be TIMON's "friend. I will treat all beſides as enemies and "betrayers. To converſe with them were pro-"fanation; to herd with them, impiety. Ac-"curſed be the day that brings them to my "ſight! I will look upon men, in ſhort, as no "more than ſo many ſtatues of braſs or ſtone; "will make no truce, have no connection with

" them. My retreat ſhall be the boundary to
" ſeparate us for ever. Relations, friends, and
" country, are empty names, reſpected by fools
" alone. Let TIMON only be rich, and deſpiſe
" all the world beſide. Abhorring idle praiſe,
" and odious flattery, he ſhall be delighted with
" himſelf alone. Alone ſhall he ſacrifice to the
" gods, feaſt alone, be his own neighbour, and
" his own companion. I am determined to be
" alone for life; and when I die, to place the
" crown upon my own head. The faireſt name
" I would be diſtinguiſhed by is that of MISAN-
" THROPE. I would be known and marked out
" by my aſperity of manners; by moroſeneſs,
" cruelty, anger, and inhumanity. Were I
" to ſee a man periſhing in the flames, and
" imploring me to extinguiſh them, I would
" throw pitch or oil into the fire to increaſe it: or,
" if the winter flood ſhould overwhelm another,
" who, with outſtretched hands, ſhould beg me
" to aſſiſt him, I would plunge him ſtill deeper
" in the ſtream, that he might never riſe again.
" Thus ſhall I be revenged of mankind. This
" is TIMON's law, and this hath TIMON rati-
" fied. I ſhould be glad, however, that all
" might know how I abound in riches,* be-
cauſe

* JUPITER hearing the complaints of the liberal-minded TIMON, reſolved to relieve his diſtreſs, and ſent PLUTUS, the god

"cauſe that I know will make them miſera-
"ble."

The moral to be drawn from this dialogue of the celebrated Grecian philoſopher, is the extreme danger to which the beſt and moſt benevolent characters may be expoſed, by an indiſcreet and unchecked indulgence of thoſe painful

god of wealth, accompanied by MERCURY, to reſtore him to riches, to whom TIMON makes this noble reply. "To you, MERCURY, and to JUPITER, for your care of me, I acknowledge my obligation: but as for this PLUTUS, I will by no means accept of him, becauſe he was the author of all my paſt misfortunes, gave me up to flatterers and evil counſellors, corrupted me with perpetual temptations, and rendered me the object of hatred and of envy; but, above all, becauſe he perfidiouſly deſerted me. POVERTY, on the other hand, my beſt and trueſt friend, exerciſed me with wholeſome labours, ſupplied me with what was neceſſary, taught me to contemn every thing ſuperfluous, and to rely upon myſelf alone; ſhewed me what true riches were; thoſe treaſures which neither the fawning ſycophant, nor the angry multitude, the time-ſerving orator, nor the enſnaring tyrant, can ever wreſt from me. Thus while with pleaſure I till this little field, my ſpade moſt abundantly ſupplies me with every thing that is really neceſſary. Return, therefore, good MERCURY, the way you came, and carry PLUTUS back with you to JUPITER. I ſhall be ſatisfied if he makes fools of all mankind, as he has of me."—At length, however, he obeyed, and agreed, in compliance with the will of the gods, to be rich again, upon condition that they ſhould preſerve him in his innocence and happineſs, and prevent the wealth they intended to beſtow from making him miſerable, by teaching him how to uſe it.

feelings with which the baſeneſs and ingratitude of the world are apt to wound the heart. There are, however, thoſe who, without having received ill treatment from the world, foſter in their boſoms a ſplenetic animoſity againſt ſociety, and ſecretly exult in the miſeries and misfortunes of their fellow creatures. Indulging themſelves in the indolent habits of vice and vanity, and feeling a mortification in being diſappointed of thoſe rewards which virtuous induſtry can alone beſtow, they ſeek a gloomy ſolitude to hide them from thoſe lights which equally diſcover the errors of vice and the rectitude of virtue. Unable to attain glory for themſelves, and incapable of enduring the luſtre of it in others, they creep into diſcontented retirement, from which they only emerge to envy the ſatisfaction which accompanies real merit, to calumniate the character to which it belongs; and, like SATAN, on the view of Paradiſe, to "ſee undelighted all delight."

There are, however, a claſs of a very different deſcription, who, unoppreſſed by moody melancholy, untinctured by petulance or ſpleen, free from reſentment, and replete with every generous thought and manly ſentiment, calmly and contentedly retire from ſociety, to enjoy, uninterruptedly, a happy communion with thoſe high and enlightened minds, who have adorned

by

by their actions the page of hiſtory, enlarged by their talents the powers of the human mind, and encreaſed by their virtues the happineſs of mankind.

He who would know RETIREMENT's joy refin'd,
The fair receſs muſt ſeek with chearful mind:
No Cynic's pride, no bigot's heated brain,
No fruſtrate hope, nor love's fantaſtic pain,
With him muſt enter the ſequeſter'd cell,
Who means with pleaſing SOLITUDE to dwell;
But equal paſſions let his boſom rule;
A judgment candid, and a temper cool;
Enlarg'd with knowledge, and in conſcience clear;
Above LIFE's empty hopes, and DEATH's vain fear.

RETIREMENT, however ſolitary it may be, when entered into with ſuch a temper of mind, inſtead of creating or encouraging any hatred towards the ſpecies, raiſes our ideas of the poſſible dignity of human nature; diſpoſes our hearts to feel, and our hands to relieve, the misfortunes and neceſſities of our fellow creatures; calls to our minds what high, capacious powers lie folded up in man; and giving to every part of creation its fineſt forms, and richeſt colours, exhibits to our admiration its brighteſt glories and higheſt perfections, and induces us to tranſplant the charm which exiſts in our own boſoms into the boſoms of others.

——————————— The ſpacious weſt,
And all the teeming regions of the ſouth,

Hold

Hold not a quarry, to the curious flight
Of knowledge, half ſo tempting, or ſo fair,
As MAN to MAN: nor only where the ſmiles
Of love invite; nor only where the applauſe
Of cordial honour turns the attentive eye
On Virtue's graceful deeds: for ſince the courſe
Of things external acts in different ways
On human apprehenſion, as the hand
Of nature temper'd to a different frame
Peculiar minds, ſo haply where the powers
Of fancy neither leſſen nor enlarge
The images of things, but paint, in all
Their genuine hues, the features which they wear
In nature, there opinions will be true
And action right——————————."

It is, indeed, not the leaſt of thoſe many benefits which humane and generous characters derive from SOLITUDE, that, by enabling them to form a juſt and true eſtimate of men and things, it becomes the ſureſt remedy againſt miſanthropy. The deformed features of vice being out of their view, and ſeldom in their contemplation, they regard the vicious with an eye of pity; and while they are endeavouring to correct their own defects, they are taught to treat the defects of others with candour, to obſerve their virtues without envy, and their vices without rancour. The moral and intellectual faculties of the ſoul are invigorated and enlarged by the habits of reflection which retirement creates. Its benign influence, indeed, has been acknowledged

ledged not only by philoſophers, poets, and heroes, but by all who, endeavouring, by the exertions of genius, and the exerciſe of benevolence, to raiſe themſelves above the common level of humanity, have reſigned the vain and empty ſplendors of public life, for the ſilence and ſimplicity of rural ſhades, where, ſcreened from the intruſion of vice, and the unintereſting details of petty occupations, they have enjoyed all that can add dignity to the nature, or real ſplendor to the character of man.

——————Is aught ſo fair
In all the dewy landſcapes of the ſpring,
In the bright eye of Heſper or the morn,
In nature's faireſt forms is aught ſo fair
As virtuous Friendſhip, as the candid bluſh
Of him who ſtrives with Fortune to be juſt?
The graceful tear, that ſtreams for others' woes;
Or the mild majeſty of private life,
Where peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
The gate; where honour's liberal hands effuſe
Unenvied treaſures, and the ſnowy wings
Of innocence and love protect the ſcene?

A rational Solitude, while it corrects the paſſions, improves the benevolent diſpoſitions of the heart, increaſes the energies of the mind, and draws forth its latent powers. The Athenian orator CALLISTRATUS was to plead in the cauſe which

which the city of OROPUS had depending; and the expectation of the public was greatly raiſed both by the powers of the orator, which were then in the higheſt repute, and the importance of the trial. DEMOSTHENES hearing the governors and tutors agree among themſelves to attend the trial, with much importunity prevailed on his maſter to take him to hear the pleaders. The maſter having ſome acquaintance with the officer who opened the court, got his young pupil a ſeat where he could hear the orators without being ſeen. CALLISTRATUS had great ſucceſs, and his abilities were extremely admired. DEMOSTHENES was fired with a ſpirit of emulation. When he ſaw with what diſtinction the orator was conducted home, and complimented by the people, he was ſtruck ſtill more with the power of that commanding eloquence which could carry all before it. From this time, therefore, he bade adieu to the other ſtudies and exerciſes in which boys are engaged, and applied himſelf with great aſſiduity to declaiming, in hopes of being one day numbered among the orators. SATYRUS, the player, who was an acquaintance of his, and to whom he lamented, after having been for ſome time called to THE BAR, "that, though he had almoſt ſacrificed his health to his ſtudies, he could gain no favour with

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Thurston del. Ridley sculp

Jerome in the Wilderness.

Vol. 2.

Published by Vernor & Hood, 31 Poultry, July [illegible]

with the people," promiſed to provide him with a remedy, if he would repeat ſome ſpeech in EURIPIDES or SOPHOCLES. When DEMOSTHENES had finiſhed his recitation, SATYRUS pronounced the ſame ſpeech; and he did it with ſuch propriety of action, and ſo much in character, that it appeared to the orator quite a different paſſage; and DEMOSTHENES now underſtanding how much grace and dignity ACTION adds to the beſt oration, quitted the practice of compoſition, and building a ſubterraneous ſtudy, repaired thither, for two or three months together, to form his action, and exerciſe his voice; and by this means formed that ſtrong, impaſſioned, and irreſiſtible eloquence which rendered him the glory of ATHENS, and the admiration of the world. Moſt of the exalted heroes, both of GREECE and ROME, who devoted their attention to arts and to arms, acquired their chief excellency in their reſpective purſuits, by retiring from public obſervation, and cultivating their talents in the ſilence of SOLITUDE. ST. JEROME, the moſt learned of all the Latin fathers, and ſon of the celebrated EUSEBIUS, retired from the perſecution of religious fury into an obſcure and dreary deſart in *Syria*, where he attained that rich, animated, and ſublime ſtyle of eloquence, which afterwards ſo eſſentially contributed to ſupport the riſing church, and

to

to enlighten while it dazzled the Chriſtian world.* The DRUIDS, or miniſters of religion among

* ST. JEROME was born at *Stridon*, a city of the ancient PANNONIA, about the year 340. He ſtudied at *Rome* under DONATUS, the learned grammarian. After having received baptiſm, he went into Gaul, and there tranſcribed ST. HILARY's book *De Synodis*. He then went into AQUILEIA, where he contracted a friendſhip with HELIODORUS, who prevailed on him to travel with him into Thrace, Pontus, Bithynia, Galatia, and Cappadocia. In 372 he retired into the deſart, where he was perſecuted by the orthodox of MELITIUS's party for being *a Sabellian*, becauſe he had made uſe of the word *Hypoſtaſis*, which had been uſed by the council of ROME in 369. This obliged him to go to JERUSALEM, where he applied himſelf to the ſtudy of the Hebrew language, in order to obtain a more perfect knowledge of the holy ſcriptures; and about this time he conſented to be ordained, on condition that he ſhould not be confined to any particular church. In 381 he went to *Conſtantinople*, to hear ST. GREGORY of *Nazianzen*; and the following year returned to *Rome*, where he was made ſecretary to POPE DAMASUS. He there inſtructed many Roman ladies in piety, and the knowledge of the ſciences, which expoſed him to the calumnies of thoſe whom he zealouſly reproved for their irregularities; and POPE SIRICIUS not having all the eſteem for him which his learning and virtue juſtly entitled him to, he left *Rome*, and returned to the monaſtery of *Bethlehem*, where he employed himſelf in writing againſt thoſe whom he called *heretics*, eſpecially againſt VIGILANTIUS and JOVINIAN. He had a quarrel with JOHN OF JERUSALEM and RUFINUS about the *Originiſts*. He was the firſt who wrote againſt PELAGIUS, and died on the 30th of September, 420, at about eighty years of age. During the laſt moments of his life, he regarded the weeping friends that ſurrounded his bed with

among the ancient Gauls, Britons, and Germans, retired, in the intervals of their ſacred functions, into awful foreſts and conſecrated groves, where they paſſed their time in uſeful ſtudy and pious prayers; and while they acquired a complete knowledge of aſtrology, geometry, natural philoſophy, politics, geography, morals, and religion, rendered themſelves happy and revered, and produced, by the wiſe inſtruction they were capable of affording to others, but particularly to youth, whoſe education they ſuperintended, a bright ſucceſſion of prieſts, legiſlators, counſellors, judges, phyſicians, philoſophers, and tutors, to the reſpective nations in which they reſided.

Averſe to public noiſe, ambitious ſtrife,
And all the ſplendid ills of buſy life,
Through latent paths, unmark'd by vulgar eye,
Are there who wiſh to paſs unheeded by?

Where

with mild reſignation, and apparent joy. "My dear friends," ſaid he, "partake of the pleaſure and happineſs I now feel. My ſoul is about to take its flight from the thraldom of the world into the regions of eternal bliſs. Men have miſtakenly deſcribed *death* to be a dreadful thing; it is only ſo to the vain and wicked. Since the doctrines of Chriſtianity have been revealed, even tortures cannot render it diſpleaſing, as it is always accompanied, in the minds of thoſe who love their Saviour JESUS CHRIST, with the idea of an eternal felicity. If you would wiſh to experience the ſweets of dying in perfect peace, let me exhort you to live in the practice of Virtue, and to follow the precepts of our holy Religion."

Where calm RETIREMENT's ſacred pleaſures move,
The hour contemplative, or friend they love:
Yet not by ſpleen or contemplation led,
Forbear ambitious giddy heights to tread;
Who not inglorious ſpend their peaceful day,
While SCIENCE, lovely ſtar! directs their way?
Flows there not ſomething good from ſuch as theſe?
No uſeful product from the man of eaſe?
And ſhall the muſe no ſocial merit boaſt?
Are all her vigils to the public loſt?
Tho' noiſy pride may ſcorn her ſilent toil,
Fair are the fruits which bleſs her happy ſoil:
There every plant of uſeful produce grows,
There ſcience ſprings, and there inſtruction flows:
There true philoſophy erects her ſchool,
There plans her problems, and there forms her rule;
There every ſeed of every art began,
And all that eaſes life and brightens man.

The modern JULIAN, the juſtly celebrated FREDERICK, king of PRUSSIA, derives the higheſt advantages from his dignified retirement at *Sans Souci*, where he contrives the means of hurling inevitable deſtruction againſt the enemies of his country; liſtens to and relieves, with all the anxiety of a tender parent, the complaints and injuries of his meaneſt ſubjects; and recreates his excurſive mind, by reviſing and correcting his immortal works for the admiration of poſterity. Philoſophy, poetry, and politics, are the ſucceſſive objects of his attention; and while he extends his views, and ſtrengthens his underſtanding,

underſtanding, by the ſtudy of ancient wiſdom, he ameliorates his heart by the delightful offerings of the muſes, and increaſes the public ſtrength by the wiſe and economical management of his reſources. An awful ſilence, interrupted only by gentle airs, with which it is refreſhed, pervades this delightful retreat. It was during the twilight of an autumnal evening that I viſited this ſolemn ſcene. As I approached the apartment of this philoſophic hero, I diſcovered him ſitting "nobly penſive" near a ſmall table, from which ſhone the feeble rays of a common taper. No jealous centinels, or ceremonious chamberlain, impeded my progreſs, by the ſcrutinizing enquiries of ſuſpicion and miſtruſt; and I walked free and unchecked, except by reſpect and veneration, through the humble, unoſtentatious retreat of this extraordinary man. All characters, however high and illuſtrious they may be, who wiſh to attain a comprehenſive view of things, and to ſhine in the higheſt ſpheres of virtue, muſt learn the rudiments of glory under the diſcipline of occaſional retirement.

SOLITUDE is frequently ſought from an inclination to extend the knowledge of our talents and characters to thoſe with whom we have no opportunity of being immediately acquainted; by preparing with greater care, and cloſer application,

cation, for the inſpection of our contemporaries, works worthy of the fame we are ſo anxious to acquire: but it ſeldom happens, alas! that thoſe whoſe labours are moſt pregnant with inſtruction and delight, have received from the age or country in which they lived, or even from the companions with whom they aſſociated, the tribute of kindneſs or applauſe that is juſtly due to their merits. The work which is ſtigmatized and traduced by the envy, ignorance, or local prejudices of a country for whoſe delight and inſtruction it was particularly intended, frequently receives from the generous ſuffrages of impartial and unprejudiced ſtrangers the higheſt tribute of applauſe. Even thoſe pretended friends under whoſe auſpices it was at firſt undertaken, upon whoſe advice it proceeded, and upon whoſe judgment it was at length publiſhed, no ſooner hear its praiſes reſounded from diſtant quarters, than they permit the poiſoned ſhafts of calumny to fly unaverted around the unſuſpecting author, and warrant, by their ſilence, or aſſiſt, by their ſneers, every inſidious inſinuation againſt his motives or his principles. This ſpecies of malevolence has been feelingly painted by the celebrated PETRARCH: "No ſooner had my fame," ſays he, "riſen above the level of that which my contem-"poraries had acquired, than every tongue bab-"bled, and every pen was brandiſhed againſt

" me: thoſe who had before appeared to be my " deareſt friends, inſtantly became my deadlieſt " enemies: the ſhafts of envy were induſtriouſ- " ly directed againſt me from every quarter: " the critics, to whom my poetry had before " been much more familiar than their pſalms " or their prayers, ſeized, with malignant de- " light, every opportunity of traducing my mo- " rals; and thoſe with whom I had been moſt " intimate, were the moſt eager to injure my " character, and deſtroy my fame." The ſtudent, however, ought not to be diſcouraged by this inſtance of envy and ingratitude. He who, conſcious of his merit, learns to depend only on himſelf for ſupport, will forget the injuſtice of the world, and draw his comfort and ſatisfaction from more infallible ſources: like the truly benevolent and great, he will confer his favours on the public without the expectation of a return; and look with perfect indifference upon all the efforts his treacherous friends, or open enemies, are capable of uſing. He will, like PETRARCH, appeal to poſterity for his reward; and the juſtice and generoſity of future ages will preſerve his memory, and tranſmit his fame to ſucceeding generations, heightened and adorned in proportion as it has been contemporaneouſly mutilated and depreſſed.

The

The genius of many noble-minded authors, particularly in GERMANY, are obſcured and blighted by the thick and baneful fogs with which ignorance and envy overwhelm their works. Unable to withſtand the inceſſant oppoſition they meet with, the powers of the mind grow feeble and relaxed; and many a fair deſign and virtuous purſuit is quitted in deſpair. How frequently does the deſponding mind exclaim, "I feel my powers influenced by the "affections of the heart. I am certainly inca- "pable of doing to any individual an intentional "injury, and I ſeek with anxiety every oppor- "tunity of doing good; but, alas! my motives "are perverted, my deſigns miſrepreſented, my "endeavours counteracted, my very perſon ri- "diculed, and my character defamed." There are, indeed, thoſe whoſe courage and fortitude no oppoſition can damp, and no adverſity ſubdue; whoſe firm and ſteady minds proceed with determined reſolution to accompliſh their deſigns in defiance of all reſiſtance; and whoſe refulgent talents drive away the clouds of ſurrounding dulneſs like fogs before the ſun. WIELAND, the happy WIELAND, the adopted child of every muſe, the favourite pupil of the Graces, formed the powers of his extraordinary mind in a lonely and obſcure retreat, the little village of *Biberach*, in the circle of *Suabia*, and thereby

thereby laid the foundation for that indiſputable glory he has ſince attained. In ſolitude and ſilence he enriched his mind with all the ſtores that art and ſcience could produce, and enabled himſelf to delight and inſtruct mankind by adorning the ſober mien of philoſophy, and the lively ſmiles of wit, with the true ſpirit and irreſiſtible charms of poetry. Retirement is the true parent of the great and good, and the kind nurſe of nature's powers.* It is to occaſional retirement that POLITICS owe the ableſt ſtateſmen, and PHILOSOPHY the moſt celebrated ſages. Did ARISTOTLE, the peripatetic chief, compoſe his

* "To be able to procure its own entertainment, and to ſubſiſt upon its own ſtock," ſays Dr. JOHNSON, "is not the prerogative of every mind. There are, indeed, underſtandings ſo fertile and comprehenſive, that they can always feed reflection with new ſupplies, and ſuffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amuſements; as ſome cities have within their own walls encloſed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a ſiege. But others live only from day to day, and muſt be conſtantly enabled, by foreign ſupplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and ſtupidity. Such could not, indeed, be blamed for hovering within the reach of their uſual pleaſures, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element, were not their faculties contracted by their own fault. But let not thoſe who go into the country merely becauſe they dare not be left alone at home, boaſt their love of nature, or their qualifications for ſolitude; nor pretend that they receive inſtantaneous infuſions of wiſdom from the dryads; and are able, when they leave ſmoke and noiſe behind, to act, to think, or to reaſon for themſelves."

profound ſyſtems in the tumultuous court of PHILIP, or were the ſublime theories of his maſter conceived among the noiſy feaſts of the tyrant DIONYSIUS? No. The celebrated groves of THE ACADEMY, and the ſhades of ATARNYA, bear witneſs of the important advantages which, in the opinion both of PLATO and ARISTOTLE, learning may derive from a rational retirement.*

Theſe

* PLATO, the illuſtrious philoſopher of antiquity, was by deſcent an Athenian, though the place of his birth was the iſland of Egina. The time of his birth is commonly placed in the beginning of the 88th olympiad, or about 430 years before the Chriſtian æra. He gave early indication of an extenſive and original genius. He applied with great diligence to the ſtudy of the arts of painting and poetry, and made ſuch proficiency in the latter as to produce an epic poem, which, upon comparing it with the poem of HOMER, he committed to the flames. At the age of twenty he compoſed a dramatic piece; but, after he had given it to the performers, happening to attend upon a diſcourſe of SOCRATES, he was ſo captivated by his eloquence, that he reclaimed his tragedy without ſuffering it to be acted, renounced the muſes, burnt all his poems, and applied himſelf wholly to the ſtudy of wiſdom. After ſome time he ſettled in *Athens*, and executed the deſign which he had long had in contemplation, of forming a new ſchool for the inſtruction of youth in the principles of philoſophy. The place which he made choice of for this purpoſe was a public grove, called THE ACADEMY, from HECADEMUS, who left it to the citizens for the purpoſe of gymnaſtic exerciſes. Adorned with ſtatues, temples, and ſepulchres, planted with lofty plane trees, and interſected by a gentle ſtream, it afforded a delightful retreat for philoſophy and the muſes. This ſchool ſoon became famous, and its maſter

was

These great men, like all others who preceded or have followed them, found in the ease and quietude of retirement the best means of forming their minds and extending their discoveries. The celebrated LEIBNITZ, to whom the world is

 deeply

was ranked among the most eminent philosophers. But greatness was never yet exempted from envy. The distinguished reputation of PLATO brought upon him the hatred of his former companions in the school of SOCRATES, and they loaded him with detraction and obloquy. DIOGENES, the Cynic, was vastly offended at the politeness and fine taste of PLATO, and used to catch at all opportunities of snarling at him. He dined one day at his table with other company, and trampling upon the tapestry with his dirty feet, uttered this brutish sarcasm: "*I trample upon the pride of* PLATO." To which PLATO wisely reparteed, "*With greater pride.*" The fame of PLATO drew disciples to him from all parts, and among the rest the great ARISTOTLE. He died in the 81st year of his age: but his disciple, who was born at *Stagyra*, a small city in MACEDON, in the 99th olympiad, about 384 years before the birth of Christ, preserved the memory, and propagated the principles, of his illustrious master. The last fourteen years of his life he spent mostly at ATHENS, surrounded with every assistance which men and books could afford him for prosecuting his philosophical enquiries. PHILIP confided the education of his son ALEXANDER the Great to his care. "I thank the gods," said the king, in his introductory letter, "not so much for having given me a son, as for their having given him to me during the life of ARISTOTLE; and I have no doubt but that you will make him worthy of me and of his country." He died, at the age of sixty-three, far from his country and his friends. RAPIN has compared the talents and characters of these two extraordinary men with great spirit and ability.

deeply indebted, paſſed a great part of every year at an humble, quiet, retired, and beautiful villa which he poſſeſſed in the vicinity of HANOVER.

To this catalogue of cauſes conducing to a love of Solitude, or hatred of Society, we may add RELIGION and FANATICISM. The benign genius of Religion leads the mind to a love of retirement from motives the higheſt, the moſt noble, and moſt really intereſting that can poſſibly be conceived, and produces the moſt perfect ſtate of human happineſs, by inſtilling into the heart the moſt virtuous propenſities, and inſpiring the mind with its fineſt energies: but Fanaticiſm muſt ever be unhappy; for it proceeds from a ſubverſion of nature itſelf, is formed on a perverſion of reaſon, and a violation of truth; it is the vice of low and little underſtandings, is produced by an ignorance of human nature, a miſapprehenſion of the Deity, and cannot be practiſed without a renunciation of real virtue. The paſſion for retirement which a ſenſe of RELIGION enforces, riſes in proportion as the heart is pure and the mind correct; but the diſpoſition to Solitude which FANATICISM creates, ariſes from a wild, enthuſiaſtic notion of inſpiration, and increaſes in proportion as the heart is corrupt, and the mind deranged. RELIGION is the offſpring of Truth and Love, and the parent of

Benevolence,

Benevolence, Hope and Joy: but the monſter FANATICISM is the child of Diſcontent, and her followers are Fear and Sorrow. Religion is not confined to cells and cloſets, nor reſtrained to ſullen retirement; theſe are the gloomy retreats of Fanaticiſm, by which ſhe endeavours to break thoſe chains of benevolence and ſocial affection that link the welfare of every individual with that of the whole. The greateſt honour we can pay to the Author of our being, is by ſuch a chearful behaviour as diſcovers a mind ſatisfied with his diſpenſations. But this temper of mind is moſt likely to be attained by a rational retirement from the cares and pleaſures of the world. "Although," ſays a celebrated preacher, "an entire retreat from the world would lay us aſide from the part for which Providence chiefly intended us, it is certain that without occaſional retreat we muſt act that part very ill. There will be neither conſiſtency in the conduct, nor dignity in the character, of one who ſets apart no ſhare of his time for meditation and reflection. In the heat and buſtle of life, while paſſion is every moment throwing falſe colours on the objects around us, nothing can be viewed in a juſt light. If you wiſh that reaſon ſhould exert her native power, you muſt ſtep aſide from the crowd into the cool and ſilent ſhade. It is there that, with ſober and ſteady eye, ſhe examines what is good

or ill, what is wiſe or fooliſh, in human conduct: ſhe looks back on the paſt, ſhe looks forward to the future; and forms opinions, not for the preſent moment only, but for the whole life. How ſhould that man diſcharge any part of his duty aright who never ſuffers his paſſions to cool, who is engaged, without interruption, in the tumults of the world? This inceſſant ſtir may be called the perpetual drunkenneſs of life. It raiſes that eager fermentation of ſpirit which will be ever ſending forth the dangerous fumes of raſhneſs and folly. Whereas he who mingles RELIGIOUS RETREAT with worldly affairs, remains calm, and maſter of himſelf. He is not whirled round and rendered giddy by the agitation of the world; but, from that SACRED RETIREMENT in which he has been converſant among higher objects, comes forth into the world with manly tranquillity, fortified by the principles which he has formed, and prepared for whatever may befal him. As he who is unacquainted with retreat cannot ſuſtain any character with propriety, ſo neither can he enjoy the world with any advantage. Of the two claſſes of men who are moſt apt to be negligent of this duty, the *men of pleaſure*, and the *men of buſineſs*, it is hard to ſay which ſuffer moſt, in point of enjoyment, from that neglect. To the former every moment appears to be loſt which partakes not of the vivacity of amuſement.

amuſement. To connect one plan of gaiety with another is their whole ſtudy; till, in a very ſhort time, nothing remains but to tread the ſame beaten round, to enjoy what they have already enjoyed, and to ſee what they have often ſeen. Pleaſures thus drawn to the dregs become vapid and taſteleſs. What might have pleaſed long, if enjoyed with temperance, and mingled with RETIREMENT, being devoured with ſuch eager haſte, ſpeedily ſurfeits and diſguſts. Hence theſe are the perſons who, after having run through a rapid courſe of pleaſure, after having glittered for a few years in the foremoſt line of public amuſements, are the moſt apt to fly at laſt to a *melancholy retreat:* not led by RELIGION or reaſon, but driven by diſappointed hopes, and exhauſted ſpirits, to the penſive concluſion that "all is vanity." If uninterrupted intercourſe with the world wears out the *man of pleaſure*, it no leſs oppreſſes the *man of buſineſs* and ambition. The ſtrongeſt ſpirits muſt at length ſink under it. The happieſt temper muſt be ſoured by inceſſant returns of the oppoſition, the inconſtancy, and the treachery of men: for he who lives always in the buſtle of the world, lives in a perpetual warfare. Here an enemy encounters; there a rival ſupplants him: the ingratitude of a friend ſtings him this hour, and the pride of a ſuperior wounds him the next. In vain he flies for relief

to trifling amuſements. Theſe may afford a temporary opiate to care, but they communicate no ſtrength to the mind; on the contrary, they leave it more ſoft and defenceleſs when moleſtation and injuries renew their attack. Let him who wiſhes for an effectual cure to all the wounds which the world can inflict, retire from intercourſe with men to intercourſe with God. When he enters into his cloſet, and ſhuts the door, let him ſhut out at the ſame time all intruſion of worldly care, and dwell among objects divine and immortal. Thoſe fair proſpects of order and peace ſhall there open to his view, which form the moſt perfect contraſt to the confuſion and miſery of this earth. The celeſtial inhabitants quarrel not; among them is neither ingratitude, nor envy, nor tumult. Men may harraſs one another; but in the kingdom of God concord and tranquillity reign for ever. From ſuch objects there beams upon the mind of the pious man a pure and enlivening light; there is diffuſed over his heart a holy calm. His agitated ſpirit reaſſumes its firmneſs, and regains its peace. The world ſinks in its importance; and the load of mortality and miſery loſes almoſt all its weight. The *green paſtures* open and the *ſtill waters* flow around him; beſides which, *the Shepherd of Iſrael* guides his flock. The diſturbances and alarms ſo formidable to thoſe who are

engaged

engaged in the tumults of the world, ſeem to him only like thunder rolling afar off; like the noiſe of diſtant waters, whoſe ſound he hears, whoſe courſe he traces, but whoſe waves touch him not: and as RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT is thus evidently conducive to our happineſs in this life, ſo it is abſolutely neceſſary in order to prepare us for the life to come."

The diſpoſition to SOLITUDE, however, of whatever kind or complexion it may be, is greatly influenced by the temper and conſtitution of the body, as well as by the frame and turn of the mind. The action of thoſe cauſes proceeds, perhaps, by ſlow and inſenſible degrees, and varies in its form and manner in each individul; but though gradual or multiform, it at length reaches its point, and confirms the ſubject of it in habits of rational Retreat or unnatural Solitude.

The motives which conduce to a love of Solitude might, without doubt, be aſſigned to other cauſes; but a diſcuſſion of all the refined operations to which the mind may be expoſed, and its bent and inclination determined, by the two great powers of SENSATION and REFLECTION, would be more curious than uſeful. Relinquiſhing all enquiry into the primary or remote cauſes of human action to thoſe who are fond of the

uſeleſs ſubtilties of metaphyſics, and confining our reſearches to thoſe final or immediate cauſes which produce this diſpoſition to enjoy the benefits of RATIONAL RETIREMENT, or encounter the miſchiefs of IRRATIONAL SOLITUDE, we ſhall proceed to ſhew the miſchiefs which may reſult from the one, in order that they may be contraſted with the advantages which, in our former Volume, we have already ſhewed may be derived from the other.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE DISADVANTAGES OF SOLITUDE.

THE Retirement which is not the reſult of cool and deliberate reaſon, ſo far from improving the feelings of the heart, or ſtrengthening the powers of the mind, generally renders men leſs able to diſcharge the duties and endure the burthens of life. The wiſeſt and beſt formed ſyſtem of Retirement is, indeed, ſurrounded with a variety of dangers, which are not, without the greateſt care and caution, eaſily avoided. But in every ſpecies of total Solitude the ſurrounding perils are not only innumerable, but almoſt irreſiſtible. It would, however, be erroneous to impute all the defects which may characterize ſuch a recluſe merely to the lonelineſs of his ſituation. There are original defects implanted by the hand of nature in every conſtitution, which no ſpecies of retirement or diſcipline can totally eradicate: there are certain vices, the ſeeds of which are are ſo inherent, that no care, however great, can totally deſtroy.* The advantages

* "Ambition, avarice, irreſolution, fear, and inordinate deſires," ſays MONTAIGNE, in his excellent Eſſay on SOLITUDE,

advantages or diſadvantages ariſing from Retirement, will always be proportionate to the degrees of VIRTUE and VICE which prevail in the character of the recluſe. It is certain that an occaſional retreat from the buſineſs of the world will greatly improve the virtues, and encreaſe the happineſs, of him on whom nature has beſtowed a ſound underſtanding and a ſenſible heart; but when the heart is corrupt, the underſtanding weak, the imagination flighty, and the diſpoſition depraved, Solitude only tends to increaſe the evil, and to render the character more rank and vicious: for whatever be the culture, the produce will unavoidably partake of the quality

TUDE, "do not leave us when we change our country: our paſſions often follow us even into the cloiſters and philoſophic ſchools; and neither deſarts, caves, hair ſhirts, nor faſts, can diſengage us from them. If a man do not firſt diſengage both himſelf and his mind from the burthen with which he finds himſelf oppreſſed, motion will but make it preſs the harder; as in a ſhip the lading is of leſs incumbrance when it is well ſettled. You do a ſick man more harm than good in removing him from place to place; you confirm the diſeaſe by ſtirring him, as ſtakes ſink deeper into the ground by being moved up and down. It is not, therefore, enough to be remote from the public; it is not enough to ſhift the ſituation; a man muſt fly from the popular diſpoſitions that have taken poſſeſſion of his ſoul; he muſt lay himſelf aſide, and come to himſelf again. The diſeaſe is in the mind, which muſt eſcape from itſelf. A perſon telling SOCRATES that ſuch a one was not improved by his travels, "No wonder," ſaid SOCRATES; "for he travelled along with himſelf."

lity of the ſeeds and the nature of the ſoil; and Solitude, by allowing a weak and wicked mind leiſure to brood over its own ſuggeſtions, re-creates and rears the miſchief it was intended to prevent.

" ——————Where SOLITUDE, ſad nurſe of care,
To ſickly muſing gives the penſive mind,
There madneſs enters; and the dim-ey'd fiend,
Lorn Melancholy, night and day provokes
Her own eternal wound. The ſun grows pale;
A mournful viſionary light o'erſpreads
The chearful face of nature; earth becomes
A dreary deſart; and the heavens frown above,
Then various ſhapes of curs'd illuſion riſe;
Whate'er the wretched fear, creating fear
Forms out of nothing; and with monſters teems
Unknown in hell. The proſtrate ſoul beneath
A load of huge imagination heaves;
And all the horrors that THE GUILTY feel
With anxious flutterings wake the guilty breaſt.
From other cares abſolv'd, the buſy mind
Finds in itſelf a theme to pore upon;
And finds it miſerable, or makes it ſo."

To enable the mind, however, to form an accurate judgment of the probable conſequences of Solitude, it is, perhaps, neceſſary to have ſeen inſtances both of its advantageous and detrimental effects. The conſequences vary with the ſubject on which it operates; and the ſame ſpecies of ſolitude which to one character would be injurious, will prove to another of the higheſt benefit

benefit and advantage. The ſame perſon, indeed, may, at different periods, as his diſpoſition changes, experience, under ſimilar circumſtances of retirement, very different effects. Certain, however, it is, that an occaſional retreat from the tumultuous intercourſes of ſociety, or a judicious and well arranged retirement, cannot be prejudicial. To have pointed out the train of VIRTUES it is capable of producing, and to have been ſilent upon the black catalogue of VICES that may reſult from extreme ſecluſion, would have been the more pleaſing taſk; but I have undertaken to draw the character of SOLITUDE impartially, and muſt therefore point out its poſſible defects.

MAN, in a ſtate of ſolitary indolence and inactivity, ſinks by degrees, like ſtagnant water, into impurity and corruption. The body ſuffers with the mind's decay. It is more fatal than exceſs of action. It is a malady that renders every hope of recovery vain and viſionary. To ſink from action into reſt, is only indulging the common courſe of nature; but to riſe from long-continued indolence to voluntary activity, is extremely difficult, and almoſt impracticable. A celebrated poet has finely deſcribed this claſs of unhappy beings in the following lines:

Then look'd, and ſaw a lazy lolling ſort,
Unſeen at church, at ſenate, or at court, Of

Of ever liſtleſs loiterers, that attend
No cauſe, no truſt, no duty, and no friend.
Thee too, my PARIDEL! ſhe mark'd thee there,
Stretch'd on the rack of a too eaſy chair,
And heard thy everlaſting yawn confeſs
The pains and penalties of idleneſs.*

To preſerve the proper ſtrength both of the body and the mind, labour muſt be regularly and ſeaſonably mingled with reſt. Each of them require their ſuited exerciſes and relaxations. Philoſophers who aim at the attainment of every ſuperior excellency, do not indulge themſelves in eaſe, and ſecurely and indolently wait for the cruelties of fortune to attack them in their retirement,

* "When I lately retired," ſays old MONTAIGNE, "to my own houſe, with a reſolution to avoid all manner of concerns in buſineſs as much as poſſible, and to ſpend the ſmall remainder of my life in privacy and peace, I fancied I could not give my mind more enjoyment than to leave it at full liberty to entertain reſt, and compoſe itſelf; which I alſo hoped that it might do the more eaſily thenceforwards, as being by time become more ſettled and improved; but found that, on the contrary, like a horſe broke looſe, which runs away with greater ſpeed than the rider would put him to, it gave birth to ſo many chimeras and fantaſtic monſters one upon the neck of another, without order and deſign, that, for the ſake of ſurveying the folly and abſurdity of them, I began to draw a catalogue of them, hoping, in time, to make my mind aſhamed of itſelf.

——————— variam ſemper dant otia mentem.

"——————— E'en in the moſt retir'd ſtates
"A thouſand thoughts an *idle life* creates."

tirement, but, for fear ſhe ſhould ſurprize them in the ſtate of inexperienced and raw ſoldiers, undiſciplined for the battle, they ſally out to meet her, and put themſelves into regular training, and even upon the proof of hardſhips. Thoſe only who obſerve a proper interchange of exerciſe and reſt, can expect to enjoy health of body or chearfulneſs of mind. It is the only means by which the economy of the human frame can be regularly preſerved.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Leſs pleaſing when poſſeſt;
The tear forgot as ſoon as ſhed,
The ſunſhine of the breaſt:
Theirs buxom health, of roſy hue;
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer of vigour born;
The thoughtleſs day, the eaſy night,
The ſpirits pure, the ſlumbers light,
That fly the approach of morn.

He, therefore, who does not poſſeſs ſufficient activity to keep the body and mind in proper exerciſe; he who is unacquainted with the art of varying his amuſements, of changing the ſubjects of his contemplation, and of finding within himſelf all the materials of enjoyment, will ſoon feel Solitude not only burthenſome, but inſupportable. To ſuch a character, Solitude will not only be diſagreeable, but dangerous; for the moment

moment the temporary paſſion which draws him from ſociety has ſubſided, he will ſink into languor and indifference; and this temper is always unfavourable to moral ſentiment. The world, perhaps, with all its diſadvantages, is leſs likely to be injurious to ſuch a man, than the calm and ſilent ſhades of unenjoyed retirement.

SOLITUDE alſo, particularly when carried to an extreme, is apt to render the character of the recluſe rigid, auſtere, and inflexible, and, of courſe, unſuited to the enjoyments of ſociety. The notions he contracts are as ſingular and abſtracted as his ſituation; he adheres to them with inflexible pertinacity; his mind moves only in the accuſtomed track; he cheriſhes his preconceived errors and prejudices with fond attachment, and deſpiſes thoſe whoſe ſentiments are contrary to his own. A promiſcuous intercourſe with ſociety has the effect of rendering the mind docile, and his judgment of men and things correct; for in the world every ſubject is cloſely examined, every queſtion critically diſcuſſed; and, while the ſpirit of controverſy and oppoſition elicits truth, the mind is led into a train of rational inveſtigation, and its powers ſtrengthened and enlarged; but the mind of the recluſe being uninterruptedly confined to its own courſe of reaſoning, and to the habit of viewing objects on

on one ſide, it is unable to appreciate the reſpective weights which different arguments may deſerve, or to judge, in doubtful caſes, on which ſide truth is moſt likely to be found. A commixture of different opinions on any particular ſubject provokes a free and liberal diſcuſſion of it, an advantage which the prepoſſeſſions engendered by Solitude uniformly prevent.

Solitude, while it eſtabliſhes a dangerous confidence in the powers and opinions of its votaries, not only faſtens on the characters the errors and imperfections it has produced and foſtered, but recommends them ſtrongly to their eſteem. How frequently do we obſerve, even in perſons of rank and fortune, who reſide continually on their own eſtates, a haughty manner, and arbitrary diſpoſition, totally incompatible with that candid conduct, that open-minded behaviour, that condeſcending urbanity, that free ſpirit, which mark the character of the polite and liberal-minded gentleman, and renders him the veneration and delight of all around him! "Obſtinacy and pride," ſays Plato, "are the inevitable conſequences of a ſolitary life;" and the frequency of the fact certainly juſtifies the obſervation. Retired, ſecluded characters, having no opportunity of encountering the opinions of others, or of liſtening to any other judgment than

than their own, eſtabliſh a ſpecies of tyranny over their underſtandings, and check that free excurſion of the intellect which the diſcovery of TRUTH requires. They reject with diſdain the cloſe inveſtigations of logic, and repel all attempts to examine their arguments, and expoſe their fallacies. Their pre-conceived opinions, which they dignify with the appellation of ſettled truths, and miſtake for indiſputable axioms, have infixed themſelves ſo deeply in their minds, that they cannot endure the idea of their being rooted out or removed; and they are fearful of ſubmitting them to the teſt of controverſy, only becauſe they were originally received without due examination, and have been confirmed by the implicit conſent and approbation of their inferiors and dependents.*

SOLITUDE

* "The man of ſtudy," ſays a celebrated writer, "when he meets with an opinion that pleaſes him, catches it up with eagerneſs; looks only after ſuch arguments as tend to its confirmation; or ſpares himſelf the trouble of diſcuſſion, and adopts it with very little proof; indulges it long without ſuſpicion, in time unites it to the general body of his knowledge, and treaſures it up among inconteſtible truths: but when he comes into the world among men who, arguing upon diſſimilar principles, have been led to different concluſions, and, being placed in various ſituations, view the ſame object on many ſides, he finds his darling poſition attacked, and himſelf in no condition to defend it. Having thought always in one train, he is in the ſtate of a man who, having fenced always with the ſame maſter, is perplexed

SOLITUDE alſo, even that Solitude which poets and philoſophers have ſo feelingly deſcribed as bliſsful and beneficial, has frequently proved injurious to its delighted votaries. Men of letters are in general too inattentive to thoſe eaſy and captivating manners which give ſuch high ſpirit to the addreſs, and ſplendid decoration to the characters, of well bred men. They ſeldom qualify the aukwardneſs of ſcholaſtic habits by a free and intimate intercourſe either with the world or with each other; but being ſecluded from ſociety, and engaged in abſtracted purſuits, adopt a pedantic phraſeology, an unaccommodating addreſs, formal notions, and a partial attachment to their recondite purſuits. The common topics of converſation, and uſual entertainments of company, they treat with high, but unjuſtifiable, diſdain; and, blinded by fogs of pride and ideal ſuperiority, are rendered incapable of diſcerning their errors.

The correction of this diſpoſition in authors has been thought of ſo much importance to the intereſts

plexed and amazed by a new poſture of his antagoniſt: he is entangled in unexpected difficulties, he is harraſſed by ſudden objections, he is unprovided with ſolutions or replies, his ſurprize impedes his natural powers of reaſoning, his thoughts are ſcattered and confounded, and he gratifies the pride of airy petulance with an eaſy victory."

intereſts of morals, and to the manners of the riſing generation, that ſcholars in general have been exhorted, in the higheſt ſtrains of eloquence, by one of the moſt powerful preachers of GERMANY, from the pulpit of the politeſt city in the empire, to guard with unceaſing vigilance againſt thoſe defects, which are ſo apt to mingle with the habits of their profeſſion, and which tend to ſully the brightneſs of their characters. The orator invokes them to ſhake off that diſtant demeanour, that unſocial reſerve, that ſupercilious behaviour, and almoſt expreſs contempt, from which few of them are free, and which moſt of them practiſe when in unlettered company; and to treat their fellow citizens, however inferior they may be in erudition and ſcholaſtic knowledge, with affability and attention; to liſten to their converſation with politeneſs; to regard their errors with lenity; to view their failings with compaſſion, and their defects with liberality; to lead them into the paths of truth and ſcience by mild perſuaſion, to lure them to knowledge by gentle means, and, by reducing their converſation and ſubjects of diſcourſe to a level with the unlettered underſtandings of their auditors, to pleaſe the heart while they inſtruct the mind.

Good ſenſe and learning may eſteem obtain;
Humour and wit a laugh, if rightly ta'en:

Fair

Fair Virtue admiration may impart;
But 'tis GOOD NATURE only wins the heart:
It moulds the body to an eaſy grace,
And brightens every feature of the face:
It ſmooths the unpoliſh'd tongue with eloquence,
And adds perſuaſion to the fineſt ſenſe.

Learning and good ſenſe, indeed, to whatever degree they may be poſſeſſed, can only render the poſſeſſor happy in proportion as he employs them to increaſe the happineſs of others. To effect this, he muſt occaſionally endure the jokes of dulneſs without petulance, and liſten with complacency to the obſervations of ignorance; but, above all, he muſt carefully avoid all inclination to exhibit his own ſuperiority, and to ſhine at the expence of others.

Would you both pleaſe, and be inſtructed too,
Watch well the rage of ſhining to ſubdue;
Hear every man upon his favourite theme,
And ever be more knowing than you ſeem:
The loweſt genius will afford ſome light,
Or give a hint that had eſcap'd your ſight.
Doubt 'till he thinks you on conviction yield,
And with fit queſtions let each pauſe be fill'd;
And the moſt knowing will with pleaſure grant
You're rather much reſerv'd than ignorant.
Would you be well receiv'd where'er you go,
Remember each man vanquiſh'd is a foe.
Reſiſt not, therefore, with your utmoſt might,
But let the weakeſt think he's ſometimes right.

He,

He, for each triumph you ſhall thus decline,
Shall give ten opportunities to ſhine:
He ſees, ſince once you own'd him to excel,
That 'tis his intereſt you ſhould reaſon well.

LEARNING and WISDOM, indeed, however they may be confounded by arrogant and ſelf-conceited ſcholars, are in no reſpect ſynonimous terms; but, on the contrary, are not unfrequently quite at variance with each other. The high admiration which ſcholars are too apt to entertain of the excellency of their own talents, and the vaſt importance they generally aſcribe to their own characters and merit, inſtead of producing that ſound judgment upon men and things which conſtitutes true wiſdom, only engenders an effervescence in the imagination, the effect of which is in general the moſt frothy folly. Many of thoſe who thus pride themſelves on the purſuits of literature, have nothing to boaſt of but an indefatigable attention to ſome idle and unprofitable ſtudy; a ſtudy which, perhaps, only tends to contract the feelings of the heart, and impoveriſh the powers of the mind. True wiſdom, and genuine virtue, are the produce of thoſe enlarged views which ariſe from a general and comprehenſive knowledge both of books and men: but ſcholars, who confine their attention entirely to books, and feel no intereſt or concern for the world, deſpiſe every object that does not lie within

in

in the range of their reſpective ſtudies. By poring over obſolete works, they acquire ſentiments quite foreign to the manners of the age in which they live; form opinions as ridiculous as they are unfaſhionable; fabricate ſyſtems incomprehenſible to the reſt of mankind; and maintain arguments ſo offenſive and abſurd, that whenever they venture to diſplay their acquirements in ſociety, they are, like the bird of night, hooted back with deriſion into their daily obſcurity. Many ſtudious characters are ſo puffed up by arrogance, preſumption, ſelf-conceit, and vanity, that they can ſcarcely ſpeak upon any ſubject without hurting the feelings of their friends, and giving cauſe of triumph to their enemies. The counſel and inſtruction they affect to give, is ſo mixed with oſtentatious pedantry, that they deſtroy the very end they wiſh to promote; and, inſtead of acquiring honourable approbation, cover themſelves with merited diſgrace. PLATO, the illuſtrious chief of the Academic ſect of Athenian philoſophers, was ſo totally free from this vice of inferior minds, that it was impoſſible to diſcover in him, by ordinary and caſual converſation, that ſublime imagination, and almoſt divine intellect, which rendered him the idol of his age, and the admiration of ſucceeding generations. On his return from *Syracuſe*, to which place he had been invited by DIONYSIUS the

younger, he viſited *Olympia*, to be preſent at the performance of the Olympic games; and he was placed on the ſeat appropriated to foreigners of the higheſt diſtinction, but to whom he was not perſonally known. Some of them were ſo pleaſed with the eaſe, politeneſs, wiſdom and vivacity of his converſation, that they accompanied him to *Athens*, and, on their arrival in that city, requeſted him to procure them an interview with PLATO. But how pleaſing and ſatisfactory was their ſurprize, when, on his replying with a ſmile, "*I am the perſon whom you wiſh to ſee*," they diſcovered that this affable and entertaining companion, with whom they had travelled without diſcerning his excellency, was the moſt learned and profound philoſopher at that time exiſting in the world! The ſtudious and retired life of this extraordinary character had not decreaſed his urbanity and politeneſs, nor deprived him of the exerciſe of thoſe eaſy and ſeducing manners which ſo entirely engage the affection and win the heart. He wiſely prevented ſecluſion from robbing him of that amenity and unaſſuming eaſe ſo neceſſary to the enjoyment of ſociety. Like thoſe two eminent philoſophers of the preſent day, the wiſe MENDELSOHM and the amiable GARVE, he derived from Solitude all the benefits it is capable of conferring, without ſuffering any

of thoſe injuries which it too frequently inflicts on leſs powerful minds.

Culpable, however, as ſtudious characters in general are, by neglecting to cultivate that ſocial addreſs, and to obſerve that civility of manners, and urbane attention, which an intercourſe not only with the world, but even with private ſociety, ſo indiſpenſably requires, certain it is, that men of faſhion expect from them a more refined good breeding, and a nicer attention to the forms of politeneſs, than all their endeavours can produce. The faſhionable world, indeed, are blameable for their conſtant attempts to deride the aukwardneſs of their more erudite and abſtracted companions. The ſeverity with which they treat the defective manners of a ſcholaſtic viſitor, is a violation of the firſt rules of true politeneſs, which conſiſts entirely of a happy combination of good ſenſe and good nature, both of which dictate a different conduct, and induce rather a friendly concealment than a triumphant expoſure of ſuch venial failings. The inexperienced ſcholaſtic is entitled to indulgence, for he cannot be expected nicely to practiſe cuſtoms which he has had no opportunity to learn. To the eye of poliſhed life, his auſterity, his reſerve, his miſtakes, his indecorums, may, perhaps, appear ridiculous; but to expoſe him to

deriſion on this ſubject, is deſtructive to the general intereſts of ſociety, inaſmuch as it tends to repreſs and damp endeavours to pleaſe. How is it poſſible that men who devote the greater portion of their time to the ſolitary and abſtracted purſuits of literature, can poſſeſs that prompitude of thought, that vivacity of expreſſion, thoſe eaſy manners, and that varying humour, which prevail ſo agreeably in mixed ſociety, and which can only be acquired by a conſtant intercourſe with the world? It was not only cruel, but unjuſt, of the Swediſh courtiers to divert themſelves with the confuſion and embarraſſments into which MIEBOM and NAUDE, two celebrated writers on the *Muſic* and *Dances* of the ancients, were thrown, when the celebrated CHRISTINA deſired the one to ſing and the other to dance in public for the entertainment of the court. Still leſs excuſable were thoſe imps of faſhion in *France*, who expoſed the celebrated mathematician NICOLE to the deriſion of a large company for the miſapplication of a word. A faſhionable female at *Paris* having heard that NICOLE, who had then lately written a profound and highly approved treatiſe on the doctrine of curves, was greatly celebrated in all the circles of ſcience, and affecting to be thought the patronneſs and intimate of all perſons of diſtinguiſhed merit, ſent him ſuch an invitation to one of her parties, that

he could not refuſe to accept of. The abſtracted geometrician, who had never before been preſent at an aſſembly of the kind, received the civilities of his fair hoſteſs, and her illuſtrious friends, with all the aukwardneſs and confuſion which ſuch a ſcene muſt naturally create. After paſſing an uncomfortable evening in anſwering the obſervations of thoſe who addreſſed him, in which he experienced much greater difficulties than he would have found in ſolving the moſt intricate problem, he prepared to take his leave, and pouring out a profuſion of declarations to the lady of the houſe, of the grateful ſenſe he entertained of the high honour ſhe had conferred on him by her generous invitation, diſtinguiſhing attention, polite regard, and extraordinary civility, roſe to the climax of his compliments, by aſſuring her that the *lovely little eyes of his fair entertainer had made an impreſſion which could never be eraſed from his breaſt*, and immediately departed. But a kind friend, who was accompanying him home, whiſpered in his ear, as they were paſſing to the ſtairs, that he had paid the lady a very ill compliment, by telling her that her eyes were little, for that little eyes were univerſally underſtood by the whole ſex to be a great defect. NICOLE, mortified to an extreme by the miſtake he had thus innocently made, and reſolving to apologize to the lady,

whom

whom he conceived he had offended, returned abruptly to the company, and entreated her, with great humility, to pardon the error into which his confuſion had betrayed him, of imputing any thing like *littleneſs* to ſo high, ſo elegant, ſo diſtinguiſhed a character, declaring that he had never beheld *ſuch fine large eyes*, *ſuch fine large lips*, *ſuch fine large hands*, *or ſo fine and large a perſon altogether*, in the whole courſe of his life.

The profeſſional purſuits of ſtudents confine them, during the early periods of life, to retirement and ſecluſion, and prevent them, in general, from attempting to mix in the ſociety of the world, until age or profeſſional habits have rendered them unfit for this ſcene. Diſcouraged by the neglect they experience, and by the ridicule to which they are expoſed, on their firſt introduction into active life, from perſevering in their attempts to ſhake off the uncouth manner they have acquired, they immediately ſhrink from the diſpleaſing proſpect into their original obſcurity, in deſpair of ever attaining the talents neceſſary to render them agreeable to the elegant and gay. There are, indeed, ſome men, who, on attempting to change the calm and rational enjoyments of a retired and ſtudious life, for the more lively and loquacious pleaſures of public ſociety, perceive the manners and maxims of the

world ſo repugnant to their principles, and ſo diſagreeable to their taſte and inclinations, that they inſtantly abandon ſociety, and, renouncing all future attempts to enter into its vortex, calmly and contentedly return to their beloved retreat, under an idea that it is wrong for perſons of ſuch different diſpoſitions to intermix or invade the provinces of each other. There are alſo many ſtudious characters who avoid ſociety under an idea, that they have transferred their whole minds into their own compoſitions; that they have exhauſted all that they poſſeſſed of either inſtruction or entertainment; and that they would, like empty bottles, or ſqueezed oranges, be thrown aſide with diſregard, and, perhaps, with contempt, as perſons no longer capable of contributing to companionable pleaſures. But there are others, of ſounder ſenſe, and better judgment, who gladly relinquiſh the noiſy aſſemblies of public life, and joyfully retire to the ſweet and tranquil ſcenes of rural Solitude, becauſe they ſeldom meet, among the candidates for public approbation, a ſingle individual capable of enjoying a juſt thought, or making a rational reflection; but, on the contrary, have to encounter a hoſt of vain and frivolous pretenders to wit and learning, who herd together like the anarchs of inſurrection, to oppoſe, with noiſe and violence, the progreſs of truth and the exertions of reaſon.

Sentiments

Sentiments like theſe too frequently baniſh from the circles of ſociety characters of uſeful knowledge and of diſtinguiſhed genius, and from whoſe endowments mankind might receive both inſtruction and delight. The loſs in ſuch a caſe to the individual is, perhaps, trifling; his comforts may poſſibly be encreaſed by his ſecluſion; but the intereſts of truth and good ſenſe are thereby conſiderably injured: for the mind of man, however powerful and informed it may be in itſelf, cannot employ its energies and acquiſitions with the ſame advantage and effect, as when it is whetted by a colliſion with other minds, and poliſhed by the manners of the world. An acquaintance with the living characters and manners of the world, teaches the mind to direct its powers to their proper and moſt uſeful points; exhibits the means, and furniſhes the inſtruments, by which the beſt exertions of virtue can attain her ends; gives morals their brighteſt colour, taſte its higheſt refinement, and truth its faireſt objects. The wiſeſt and beſt philoſophers have acknowledged the obligations they were under to ſociety for the knowledge they acquired in its extenſive though dangerous ſchool, and have ſtrongly recommended the ſtudy of mankind, by viewing all the various claſſes with a diſcriminating eye, as the beſt means of becoming acquainted with the beauties of *Virtue* and the deformities of *Vice*,

and, of courſe, as the beſt means of diſcovering the true road to earthly happineſs; for

VIRTUE, immortal Virtue! born to pleaſe,
The child of nature, and the ſource of eaſe,
Bids every bliſs on human life attend;
To every rank a kind and faithful friend;
Inſpirits nature 'midſt the ſcenes of toil,
Smooths languor's cheek, and bids fell want recoil;
Shines from the mitre with unſullied rays,
Glares on the creſt, and gives the ſtar to blaze;
Supports diſtinction, ſpreads ambition's wings,
Forms ſaints of queens, and demi-gods of kings;
O'er grief, oppreſſion, envy, ſcorn, prevails,
And makes a cottage greater than Verſailles.

A free, open, unconſtrained intercourſe with mankind, has alſo the advantage of reconciling us to the peculiarities of others, and of teaching us the important leſſon how to accommodate our minds and manners to ſuch principles, opinions, and diſpoſitions, as may differ from our own. The learned and enlightened cannot maintain an intercourſe with the illiterate, without exerciſing an extraordinary degree of patience, conceding many points which appear unnatural, and forbearing to feel thoſe little vexations ſo adherent to characters who have lived in retirement. The philoſopher, in order to teach virtue to the world with any hope of ſucceſs, muſt humour its vices to a certain degree, and ſometimes even adopt the

the follies he intends to deſtroy. To inculcate wiſdom, it is neceſſary to follow the examples of SOCRATES and WIELAND, and ſeparating from morals all that is harſh, repulſive, and anti-ſocial, adopt only the kind and complacent tenets of the ſcience. A German author of the preſent day, whom I glory to call both my countryman and my friend, obſerves, with the ſagacity and diſcrimination of a true critic, in his "*Remarks on the Writings and Genius of Franklin*," that the compoſitions of that great and extraordinary character are totally free from that pomp of ſtyle, and parade of erudition, which ſo frequently diſfigure the writings of other authors, and defeat their intended effect. The pen of FRANKLIN renders the moſt abſtract principles eaſy and familiar. He conveys his inſtructions in pleaſing narrations, lively adventures, or humorous obſervations; and while his manner wins upon the heart, by the friendly intereſt he appears to take in the concerns of mankind, his matter inſtils into the mind the ſoundeſt principles of morals and good policy. He makes Fancy the handmaid to Reaſon in her reſearches into ſcience, and penetrates the underſtanding through the medium of the affections. A ſecret charm pervades every part of his works. He rivets the attention by the ſtrength of his obſervations, and relieves it by the variety of pleaſing images with which he

embelliſhes his ſubject. The perſpicuity of his ſtyle, and the equally eaſy and eloquent turn of his periods, give life and energy to his thoughts; and while the reader feels his heart bounding with delight, he finds his mind impregnated with inſtruction. Theſe high advantages reſulted entirely from his having ſtudied the world, and gained an accurate knowledge of mankind. An author, indeed, may acquire an extraordinary fund of knowledge in Solitude; but it is in Society alone that he can learn how to render it uſeful. Before he can inſtruct the world, he muſt be enabled to view its fooleries and vices with calm inſpection; to contemplate them without anger, as the unavoidable conſequences of human infirmity; to treat them with tenderneſs; and to avoid exaſperating the feelings of thoſe whoſe depravity he is attempting to correct. A moral cenſor, whoſe diſpoſition is kind and benevolent, never ſuffers his ſuperior virtue, knowledge, or talents, however great they may be, to offend the feelings of others; but, like SOCRATES, he will appear as if he were receiving himſelf the inſtruction he is imparting. It is a fine obſervation of the celebrated GOETHE, that kindneſs is the golden chain by which ſociety is bound together: thoſe who have had the happineſs to converſe with that extraordinary man, muſt have perceived the anxiety with which he

he endeavours to temper the ſtrength of his genius by the mildneſs and amenity of his converſation.

Men of letters, however aukward the habits of ſecluſion may have rendered them, would, I am convinced, be in general, if not always, treated with great politeneſs and attention, if they would be careful to treat others with the common candour which humanity requires, and with that indulgence and affability which true liberality of ſentiment will ever dictate: But how few, alas! are there, who, by complacency and condeſcenſion, entitle themſelves to the kindneſs and civility of which they ſtand ſo much in need, and ſo arrogantly expect! How is it poſſible for thoſe who are vigilantly anxious to depreſs the riſing merit of others, ever to gain their friendſhip or eſteem? Friendſhip can only be acquired by an open, ſincere, liberal, and manly conduct: but he whoſe breaſt is filled with envy and jealouſy, who cautiouſly examines before he ſpeaks, every ſentiment and feeling, leſt his tongue ſhould betray the meanneſs of his heart, and the poverty of his mind; who ſeizes every light indiſcretion, or trifling error that may inadvertently eſcape from his companions; who ſilently repines at every excellency, both moral and intellectual, which they may diſcover; who, even when ſur-

rounded by thoſe who wiſh him well, continues with guarded circumſpection, and ſuſpicious caution, to weigh the motives of their actions and converſation, as if he were ſurrounded by the bittereſt enemies, muſt be utterly incapable of eſteeming others, or being eſteemed himſelf; and to ſuppoſe that the generous flame of friendſhip, that holy fire, which, under the deepeſt adverſity, ſo comfortably warms and cheers the heart, can ever ſpring up from ſuch cold materials, and aſhy embers, would be extravagant and ridiculous.

The delight which the heart experiences in pouring forth the fulneſs of its feelings, with honeſt confidence, into the boſom of a faithful friend, is permanent and unbounded. The pleaſures which ſpring from the acquiſition of fame, whether reſulting from the generous voice of an approving public, or extorted from the reluctant tongues of envious rivals and contemporaries, will bear no compariſon with thoſe which thrill through the exulting boſom of him who can juſtly exclaim, "To the heart of this unhappy man I have given returning hopes, and made him look forward with confidence to the enjoyment of peace: to this wounded ſpirit I have imparted the balm of comfort and tranquillity; and from the bleeding boſom of my friend have driven deſpair!"

ſpair!" But to perform ſuch offices as theſe, it is indiſpenſably neceſſary that we ſhould have recommended ourſelves to the confidence, and have gained the affections of thoſe we intend to ſerve. This great and neceſſary property, however, thoſe who live ſecluded lives very ſeldom poſſeſs: but, much as they may, in general, diſdain to practiſe this high virtue, it is neceſſary that they ſhould know that it tends more to ennoble the ſentiments of the mind, and to raiſe the feelings of the heart, than their moſt ſucceſsful reſearches to diſcover ſomething before unheard of in the regions of ſcience, and which they purſue with as much avidity as if TRUTH were liable to decay, unleſs ſuſtained by the aid of novelty.

It is juſtly and beautifully ſaid by one of the apocryphal writers, that *A faithful friend is the medicine of life.* A variety of occaſions happen, when, to pour forth the heart to one whom we love and truſt, is the chief comfort, perhaps the only relief, we can enjoy. Miſerable is he who, ſhut up within the narrow incloſure of ſelfiſh intereſt, has no perſon to whom he can at all times, with full confidence, expand his ſoul. But he who can only feel an affection for ſuch as liſten continually to the ſuggeſtions of vanity, as applaud indiſcriminately the imaginary prodigies of his wit, or never contradict the egotiſm of his opinions,

opinions, is totally unfit for friendſhip, and utterly unworthy of reſpect. It is men of learning and of retired habits who are moſt likely to adopt this diſengaging diſpoſition. There are, I am ſorry to ſay it, many men, diſtinguiſhed in the paths of ſcience, who affect to poſſeſs the moſt refined ſenſibility, and whoſe tongues are continually proclaiming the virtues of benevolence, but who, when they are called upon to practiſe thoſe virtues in behalf of ſome diſtreſſed companion, turn a deaf ear to the appeal, form ſome poor excuſe for not interfering, and, if preſſed to come forward with ſome promiſed aſſiſtance, deny to afford it, becauſe the unhappy ſufferer has neglected to approve of ſome extravagant conjecture, or to adopt all the viſionary notions, and Utopian ſyſtems, they may have framed. He who neglects to perform the common charities of life, becauſe his idle vanity may have been offended by the neglect or indifference of his companions, will never find, and cannot become, a real friend. There are alſo an inferior order of fops in literature, (if any order can be inferior to that which I have laſt deſcribed,) who carry with them, wherever they go, a collection of their lateſt compoſitions, and, by importunately reading them to every one they meet, and expecting an unreſerved approbation of their merits, render themſelves ſo unpleaſantly troubleſome

troubleſome on all occaſions, that, inſtead of conciliating the leaſt regard or eſteem, their very approach is dreaded as much as a peſtilence or a famine. Every man of real genius will ſhun this falſe ambition of gratifying vanity by forced applauſe, becauſe he will immediately perceive, that, inſtead of gaining the hearts of his auditors, he only expoſes himſelf to their ridicule, and loſes all chance of their eſteem.

The diſadvantages, however, which ſtudious characters have been deſcribed to experience from habits of ſolitary ſecluſion, and by neglecting the manners of ſociety, muſt not be indiſcriminately applied. It is the moroſe and ſurly pedant, who ſits ſilently in his ſolitary ſtudy, and endeavours to enforce a character for genius in oppoſition to nature, who adopts the mean and unworthy arts of jealouſy, ſuſpicion, and diſhoneſt praiſe. Far different the calm, happy and honourable life of him, who, devoted to the cultivation of a ſtrong underſtanding, and the improvement of a feeling heart, is enabled, by his application and genius, to direct the taſte of the age by his liberality of ſpirit, to look on his equals without jealouſy, and his ſuperiors with admiration; and, by his benevolence, to feel for the multitude he inſtructs indulgence and affection; who, relying on the real greatneſs of his character, makes no attempt

attempt to increaſe his importance by low raillery or unfounded ſatire; whoſe firm temper never ſinks into ſupine indolence, or grovelling melancholy; who only conſiders his profeſſion as the means of ameliorating mankind; who perſeveres in the cauſe of truth with chearful rectitude and virtuous dignity; whoſe intellectual reſources ſatisfactorily ſupply the abſence of ſociety; whoſe capacious mind enables him to encreaſe his ſtores of uſeful knowledge; whoſe diſcriminating powers enable him to elucidate the ſubject he explores; who feels as great a delight in promoting the beneficial diſcoveries of others as in executing his own; and who regards his profeſſional contemporaries, not as jealous rivals, but as generous friends, ſtriving to emulate each other in the noble purſuits of ſcience, and in the laudable taſk of endeavouring to improve the morals of mankind.

Characters of this deſcription, equally venerable and happy, are numerous in Europe, both within and without the ſhades of academic bowers, and afford examples which, notwithſtanding the tribe of errors and abſurdities Solitude occaſionally engenders, ſhould induce men of worldly pleaſures to repreſs the antipathies they are in general inclined to feel againſt perſons of ſtudious and retired lives.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

THE INFLUENCE OF SOLITUDE ON THE IMAGINATION.

THE powers of imagination are great; and the effects produced by them, under certain circumſtances, upon the minds of men of warm and ſenſible tempers, extraordinary and ſurprizing. Multitudes have been induced, by perturbed imaginations, to abandon the gay and chearful haunts of men, and to ſeek in dreary deſolation comfort and repoſe. To ſuch extremes has this faculty, when diſtorted, hurried its unhappy ſubjects, that they have endured the ſevereſt mortification, denied themſelves the common benefits of nature, expoſed themſelves to the keeneſt edge of winter's cold, and the moſt ſcorching rays of ſummer's heat, and indulged their diſtempered fancies in the wildeſt chimeras. Theſe dreadful effects appear, on a firſt view, to be owing to ſome ſupernatural cauſe, and they agitate our ſenſes, and confuſe the underſtanding, as phenomena beyond the comprehenſion of reaſon: but the wonder vaniſhes when the cauſe is coolly and carefully explored; and the extravagancies are traced up to their real ſource, the natural organization

nization of man. The wild ideas of the hermit ANTHONY,* who, in his gloomy retreat, fancied that BEELZEBUB appeared to him in the form of a beautiful female, to torture his ſenſes, and diſturb

* ST. ANTHONY was born in Egypt in the year 252, and inherited a large fortune, which he diſtributed among his neighbours and the poor; retired into Solitude; founded a religious order; built many monaſteries; and died in the year 356. Many ridiculous ſtories are told of his conflicts with the devil, and of his miracles. There are ſeven epiſtles extant attributed to him. He is ſometimes repreſented with a fire by his ſide, to ſignify that he relieved perſons from the inflammation called after his name; but is always accompanied by a Hog, on account of his having been a ſwineherd, and curing all diſorders in that animal. To do him the greater honour, the Romaniſts, in ſeveral places, keep, at common charges, a hog, denominated *St. Anthony's Hog*, for which they have great veneration. Some will have St. Anthony's picture on the walls of their houſes, hoping by that to be preſerved from the plague: and the Italians, who do not know the true ſignification of the fire painted at the ſide of their ſaint, conclude that he preſerves their houſes from conflagration. Both painters and poets have made very free with this ſaint and his followers: the former, by the many ludicrous pictures of his temptation; and the latter, by divers epigrams on his diſciples or friars, one of which is the following, printed in STEPHENS's *World of Wonders*.

"Once fed thou ANTHONY a herd of ſwine,
And now a herd of monks thou feedeſt ſtill.
For wit and gut alike they both ha' been:
Both loved filth alike; both like to fill
Their greedy paunch alike: nor was that kind
More beaſtly, ſottiſh, ſwiniſh, than this laſt.
All elſe agrees: one fault I only find,
Thou feedeſt not thy monks with oaken maſt."

turb his repoſe, originated in his natural character and diſpoſition. His diſtempered fancy conjured up a fiend, which, in fact, exiſted in his unſubdued paſſions and incontinent deſires.

——————— From the inchanting cup
Which FANCY holds to all, the unwary thirſt
Of youth oft ſwallows a Circæan draught,
That ſheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye
Of Reaſon, till no longer he diſcerns,
And only lives to err: then revel forth
A furious band, that ſpurn him from the throne,
And all is uproar. Hence the fever'd heart
Pants with delirious hope for tinſel charms.*

SOLITUDE excites and ſtrengthens the powers of the imagination to an uncommon degree, and thereby

* "There are," ſays LORD SHAFTSBURY, "certain humours in mankind, which of neceſſity muſt have vent. The human mind and body are both of them naturally ſubject to commotions; and as there are ſtrange ferments in the blood, which in many bodies occaſion an extraordinary diſcharge, ſo in Reaſon too there are heterogeneous particles, which muſt be thrown off by fermentation. Should phyſicians endeavour abſolutely to allay thoſe ferments of the body, and ſtrike in the humours which diſcover themſelves in ſuch eruptions, they might, inſtead of making a cure, bid fair, perhaps, to raiſe a plague, and turn a ſpring ague, or an autumn ſurfeit, into an epidemical malignant fever. They are certainly as ill phyſicians of the body politic, who would need be tampering with theſe mental eruptions, and, under the ſpecious pretence of healing this itch of SUPERSTITION, and ſaving ſouls from the contagion of ENTHUSIASM, ſhould ſet all nature in an uproar, and turn a few innocent carbuncles into an inflammation and mortal gangrene.

thereby enfeebles the effect of the controuling powers of Reaſon. The office of the latter faculty of the mind is to examine with nice diſcernment and ſcrupulous attention, to compare the ſeveral properties of thoughts and things with each other, and to acquire, by cool and deliberate inveſtigation, correct ideas of their combinations and effects. The exerciſe of this power ſuſpends the vehemence of action, and abates the ardour of deſire: but Fancy performs her airy excurſions upon light and vagrant wings, and flying round her objects without examination, embraces every pleaſing image with encreaſing delight. Judgment ſeparates and aſſociates the ideas the mind has gained by ſenſation and reflection, and by determining their agreement or diſagreement, ſearches after truth through the medium of probability; but the imagination employs itſelf in raiſing unſubſtantial images, and pourtraying the form of things unknown in nature, and foreign to truth. It has, indeed, like memory, the power of reviving in the mind the ideas which, after having been imprinted there, have diſappeared; but it differs from that faculty by altering, enlarging, diverſifying, and frequently diſtorting, the ſubjects of its power.

> It bodies forth the form of things unknown,
> And gives to airy nothings
> A local habitation and a name.

But

But the irregular and wild deſires which ſeize upon the mind through the avenues of an untamed fancy, and diſordered imagination, are not excluſively the produce of Solitude. The choice of WISDOM or FOLLY is offered to us in all places, and under every circumſtance; but the mind of man is unhappily prone to that which is leaſt worthy of it. I ſhall, therefore, endeavour to ſhew, by ſome general obſervations, in what inſtances Solitude is moſt likely to create thoſe flights of imagination which miſlead the mind and corrupt the heart.

Imagination is ſaid to be the ſimple apprehenſion of corporeal objects when they are abſent, which abſence of the object it contemplates diſtinguiſhes this faculty from *ſenſation*, and has occaſioned ſome metaphyſicians to call it *recorded ſenſation*.* Upon the due regulation, and proper management,

* The influence of the imagination on the conduct of life is ſaid to be one of the moſt important points in moral philoſophy. It were eaſy, by an induction of facts, to prove that the imagination directs almoſt all the paſſions, and mixes with almoſt every circumſtance of action or pleaſure. Let any man, even of the coldeſt head, and ſobereſt induſtry, analyze the idea of what he calls his intereſt; he will find that it conſiſts chiefly of certain degrees of decency, beauty, and order, variouſly combined into one ſyſtem, the idol of which he ſeeks to enjoy by labour, hazard, and ſelf-denial. It is, on this account, of the laſt

management, of this great and extraordinary power of the mind, depends, in a great meaſure, the happineſs or miſery of life. It ought to conſiſt of a happy combination of thoſe ideas we receive through the organs of bodily ſenſe, and thoſe which we derive from the faculties of moral perception; but it too frequently conſiſts of a capricious and ill-formed mixture of heterogeneous images, which, though true in themſelves, are falſe in the way they are applied. Thus a perſon, the circulation of whoſe blood in any particular member is ſuddenly ſtopped, *imagines* that needles are pricking the diſordered part. The ſenſation in this caſe is real, but the concluſion from it is fallacious. So in every mental illuſion, Imagination, when ſhe firſt begins to exerciſe her powers, ſeizes on ſome fact, of the real nature of which the mind has but an obſcure idea, and, for want of tracing it through all its connections and dependencies, miſleads Reaſon into the darkeſt paths of error. The wild conjectures, and extravagant opinions, which have iſſued from this ſource are innumerable. The Imagination

laſt conſequence to regulate thoſe images by the ſtandard of nature, and the general good; otherwiſe the imagination, by heightening ſome objects beyond their real excellence and beauty, or by repreſenting others in a more odious or terrible ſhape than they deſerve, may of courſe engage the mind in purſuits utterly inconſiſtent with the moral order of things.

Imagination receives every impulſe with eagerneſs, while the Paſſions crowd around her ſplendid throne obedient to her dictates. They act, indeed, reciprocally on each other. The Imagination pours a concourſe of contrary ideas into the mind, and eaſily diſregards or reconciles their incongruities. The voice of the calm enquirer Reaſon is incapable of being heard amidſt the tumult; and the favourite images is animated and enlarged by the glowing fire of the Paſſions. No power remains to controul or regulate, much leſs to ſubdue, this mental ray, which inflames the whole ſoul, and exalts it into the fervour of ENTHUSIASM; hurries it into the extravagance of SUPERSTITION; or precipitates it into the furious frenzies of FANATICISM.

> The powerful tumult reigns in every part,
> Pants in the breaſt, and ſwells the riſing heart.

ENTHUSIASM is that extacy of the mind, that lively tranſport of the ſoul, which is excited by the purſuit or contemplation of ſome great and noble object, the novelty of which awakens attention, the truth of which fixes the underſtanding, and the grandeur of which, by firing the fancy, engages the aid of every paſſion, and prompts the mind to the higheſt undertakings. A juſt and rightly formed enthuſiaſm is founded in reaſon, and ſupported by nature, and carries the mind above

above its ordinary level into the unexplored regions of art and ſcience. The rational enthuſiaſt, indeed, riſes to an elevation ſo far above the diſtinct view of vulgar eyes, that common underſtandings are apt to treat him either with blind admiration, or cool contempt, only becauſe they are incapable of comprehending his real character; and while ſome bow to him as an extraordinary genius, others rail at him as an unhappy lunatic. The powers of enthuſiaſm, however, when founded upon proper principles, ſo ſtrengthen and invigorate the faculties of the mind, as to enable it to reſiſt danger undiſmayed, and to ſurmount difficulties that appear irreſiſtible. Thoſe, indeed, who have poſſeſſed themſelves of this power to any extraordinary degree, have been conſidered as *inſpired*, and their great atchievements conceived to have been directed by councils, and ſuſtained by energies, of a divine or ſuper-mundane nature. Certain it is, that we owe to the ſpirit of enthuſiaſm whatever is great in art, ſublime in ſcience, or noble in the human character: and the elegant and philoſophic LORD SHAFTSBURY, while he ridicules the abſurdities of this wonderfully powerful and extenſive quality, admits that it is impoſſible to forbear aſcribing to it whatever is greatly performed by heroes, ſtateſmen, poets, orators, and even philoſophers themſelves: and who, that is not contented to wallow in the mire

of

of groſs ſenſuality, would not quit the noiſy ſcenes of tumultuous diſſipation, and repair with joy and gladneſs to ſolitary ſhades, to the bower of tranquillity, and the fountain of peace, to majeſtic foreſts, and to verdant groves, to acquire this neceſſary ingredient to perfect excellence? Who would not willingly pierce the penſive gloom, or dwell among the brighter glories of the golden age, to acquire, by a warm and glowing, but correct and chaſte, contemplation of the beautiful and ſublime works of nature, theſe raviſhing ſenſations, and gain this noble fervor of the imagination? A proper ſtudy of the works of nature, amidſt the romantic ſcenery of ſylvan Solitude, is certainly the moſt likely means of inſpiring the mind with true enthuſiaſm, and leading Genius to her moſt exalted heights; but the attempt is dangerous. There are few men in whoſe minds airy notions do not ſometimes tyrannize. "To indulge the power of fiction," ſays a celebrated writer, "and ſend imagination out upon the wing, is often the ſport of thoſe who delight too much in ſilent ſpeculation. When we are alone, we are not always buſy; the labour of excogitation is too violent to laſt long; the ardour of enquiry will ſometimes give way to idleneſs or ſatiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him, muſt find pleaſure in his own thoughts, and muſt conceive

himſelf what he is not; for who is pleaſed with what he is? He then expatiates in boundleſs futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the preſent moment he ſhould moſt deſire, amuſes his deſires with impoſſible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from ſcene to ſcene, unites all pleaſures in all combinations, riots in delights which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot beſtow. In time ſome particular train of ideas fixes the attention; all other intellectual gratifications are rejected; the mind, in wearineſs or leiſure, recurs conſtantly to the favourite conception, and feaſts on the luſcious falſehood, whenever ſhe is offended with the bitterneſs of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed; ſhe grows firſt imperious, and in time deſpotic: then fictions begin to operate as realities, falſe opinions faſten on the mind, and life paſſes in dreams of rapture or of anguiſh. This is one of the dangers of Solitude."

Theſe obſervations bring us to conſider the character of the fanatical viſionary, who feels, like the happy enthuſiaſt, the ſame agitation of paſſions and the ſame inflammation of mind; but as the feelings of the one are founded upon knowledge, truth, and nature, ſo the feelings of the other are the reſult of ignorance and error, and all the glittering

glittering meteors of his brain the effects of impoſture and deception. Of this ſpecies of *Enthuſiaſm* Mr. LOCKE gives the following deſcription: "In all ages men in whom melancholy has mixed with devotion, or whoſe conceit of themſelves has raiſed them into an opinion of a greater familiarity with God, and a nearer admittance to his favours, than is afforded to others, have often flattered themſelves with a perſuaſion of an immediate intercourſe with the Deity, and frequent communication with his divine ſpirit. Their minds being thus prepared, whatever groundleſs opinion comes to ſettle itſelf ſtrongly upon their fancies, is an illumination from the Spirit of God; and whatever odd action they find in themſelves a ſtrong inclination to do, that impulſe is concluded to be A CALL or direction from Heaven, and muſt be obeyed: It is a commiſſion from above, and they cannot err in executing it. This ſpecies of enthuſiaſm, though ariſing from the conceit of a warm and overweening brain, works, when it once gets footing, more powerfully on the perſuaſions and actions of men than either reaſon or revelation, or both together; men being forwardly obedient to all the impulſes they receive from themſelves." The fantaſtic images, indeed, which the wildneſs of his imagination creates, ſubdues his reaſon, and deſtroys the beſt

affections of his heart; while his paſſions take the part of their furious aſſailants, and render him the victim of his viſionary conceptions. It is not, however, from ſources of fanatical devotion, or irrational ſolitude, that this vicious ſpecies of enthuſiaſm alone ariſes. The follies of *Faquirs*, the extravagance of *Orgaiſts*, the abſurdities of *Hermits*, and the mummery of *Monks*, are not more enthuſiaſtically injurious to the true intereſts of mankind, or more pregnant with all the calamitous effects of this baleful vice, than thoſe unprincipled ſyſtems of politics and morals which have been of late years obtruded on the world, and in which good ſenſe is ſacrificed, and true ſcience diſgraced.

The growth of Fanaticiſm, whether moral, political, religious, or ſcientific, is not confined excluſively to any age or country; the ſeeds of it have been but too plentifully ſown in all the regions of the earth; and it is almoſt equally baneful and injurious in whatever ſoil they ſpring. Every bold, turbulent, and intriguing ſpirit, who has ſufficient artifice to inflame the paſſions of the inconſtant multitude, the moment he calls the demon of Fanaticiſm to his aid, becomes troubleſome, and frequently dangerous, to the government under which he lives. Even the affectation of this powerful, but pernicious, quality

lity, is able to produce fermentations highly detrimental to the peace of ſociety. In the very metropolis of Great Britain, and among the enlightened inhabitants of that kingdom, LORD GEORGE GORDON, in the preſent age, was enabled, by aſſuming the hypocritical appearances of piety, and ſtanding forth as the champion of a religious ſect, to convulſe the nation, and endanger its ſafety. In the twenty-firſt year of the reign of his Britannic Majeſty, the preſent powerful and illuſtrious KING GEORGE THE THIRD, an act of parliament was paſſed to relieve the Roman Catholics reſiding in *England* from the penalties and diſabilities which had been impoſed on them at the Revolution. An extenſion of the ſame relief to the Catholics of *Scotland* was alſo ſaid to be intended by parliament. The report ſpread an immediate alarm throughout the country; ſocieties were formed for the defence of the *Proteſtant faith*; committees appointed, books diſperſed, and, in ſhort, every method taken to inflame the zeal of the people. Theſe attempts being totally neglected by government, and but feebly reſiſted by the more liberal-minded in that country, produced all their effects. A furious ſpirit of bigotry and perſecution ſoon ſhewed itſelf, and broke out into the moſt outrageous acts of violence againſt the Papiſts at *Edinburgh*, *Glaſgow*, and elſewhere; and as

government did not think it adviſable to repreſs this ſpirit by force, the juſt and benevolent intentions of the legiſlature were laid aſide. The ſucceſsful reſiſtance of the zealots in *Scotland* to any relaxation of the penal laws againſt Papiſts, ſeems to have given the firſt riſe to THE PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION in *England*; for about the ſame time bills were diſperſed, and advertiſements inſerted in the newſpapers, inviting thoſe who wiſhed well to THE CAUSE to unite under that title; and LORD GEORGE GORDON, who had been active at the head of the malecontents in *Scotland*, was choſen their preſident. The ferment was ſuffered to increaſe during a courſe of ſeveral years. His lordſhip was a member of the ſenate; and his extraordinary conduct in the houſe, the frequent interruption he gave to the buſineſs of parliament, as well as the unaccountable manner in which he continually brought in and treated matters relative to religion and the danger of popery, and the caprice with which he divided the houſe upon queſtions wherein he ſtood nearly or entirely alone, were paſſed over, along with other ſingularities in his dreſs and manners, rather as ſubjects of pleaſantry than of ſerious notice or reprehenſion. On Monday, the 29th of May, 1780, a meeting was held at Coachmakers-Hall, purſuant to a public advertiſement, in order to conſider of the mode of preſenting

preſenting a petition to the Houſe of Commons' LORD GEORGE GORDON took the chair; and, after a long inflammatory harangue, in which he endeavoured to perſuade his hearers of the rapid and alarming progreſs that Popery was making in the kingdom, he proceeded to obſerve, that the only way to ſtop it, was going in a firm, manly and reſolute manner to the houſe, and ſhewing their repreſentatives, that they were determined to preſerve their religious freedom with their lives; that, for his part, he would run all hazards with the people; and if the people were too lukewarm to run all hazards with him, when their conſcience and their country called them forth, they might get another preſident, for that he would tell them candidly, he was not a lukewarm man himſelf; and that, if they meant to ſpend their time in mock debate, and idle oppoſition, they might get another leader. This ſpeech was received with the loudeſt applauſe, and his lordſhip then moved the following reſolution: "That the whole Body of the Proteſtant Aſſociation do attend in *St. George's Fields* on Friday next, at Ten o'Clock in the Morning, to accompany their Preſident to the Houſe of Commons at the delivery of the Proteſtant Petition;" which was carried unanimouſly. His lordſhip then informed them, that if leſs than twenty thouſand of his fellow citizens

attended him on that day, he would not preſent their petition. Accordingly, on Friday, the 2d of June, 1780, at ten in the forenoon, ſeveral thouſands aſſembled at the place appointed, marſhalling themſelves in ranks, and waiting for their leader, who arrived about an hour afterwards; and they all proceeded to the Houſes of Parliament. Here they began to exerciſe the moſt arbitrary power over both Lords and Commons, by obliging almoſt all the members to put blue cockades in their hats, and call out "*No Popery.*" Some they compelled to take oaths to vote for the repeal of this obnoxious act; others they inſulted in the moſt indecent and inſolent manner. They took poſſeſſion of all the avenues up to the very doors of both houſes of parliament, which they twice attempted to force open, and committed many outrages on the perſons of the members. Nor were they diſperſed, or the remaining members able to leave their ſeats, until a military force arrived. The houſes were adjourned to the 19th of June. But ſo dreadful a ſpectacle of calamity and horror was never known in any age or country, as that which the metropolis of England exhibited on the evening and the day which ſucceeded this ſeditious congregation. Theſe aſtoniſhing effects, produced by the real or pretended fanaticiſm of a ſimple individual, ſufficiently diſplay the power

of

of this dangerous quality, when artfully employed to inflame the paſſions of the unthinking multitude. But it is worthy obſervation, that while this incendiary ſuſtained among his followers the character of a pious patriot, of a man without the ſmalleſt ſpot or blemiſh, of being, in ſhort, the moſt virtuous guardian of the eſtabliſhed religion of the country, he regularly indulged his holy fervors, and ſanctified appearances, every evening, in the company of common proſtitutes or profeſſed wantons!*

* The members who were perſonally inſulted during the riot which this arch hypocrite, or half madman, had raiſed, were the Archbiſhop of York, Lord Bathurſt, the Preſident of the Council, Lord Mansfield, Chief Juſtice of the King's Bench, the Duke of Northumberland, the Biſhop of Litchfield, Lord Townſend, Lord Hilſborough, Lord Stormont, Lord Aſhburnham, and Lord Boſton. The multitude left the avenues of the Houſes of Parliament ſoon after the arrival of the guards, but they ſtill kept themſelves aſſembled in detached parties; and though order and tranquillity were re-eſtabliſhed in this part of the town, it was far otherwiſe elſewhere. On the evening of the 7th of June, 1780, London was, from one ſpot, beheld blazing in thirty-ſix different parts. Some of theſe conflagrations were of ſuch a magnitude as to be truly tremendous. Of theſe the great Jail of Newgate, the King's Bench Priſon, the New Bridewell in St. George's Fields, the Fleet Priſon, and the houſes and great diſtilleries of Mr. Langdale in Holborn, preſented ſpectacles of the moſt dreadful nature. But the outrages grew far more violent and general; and an attack was even made on the Bank. The whole activity of Government, however,

The fire of fanaticiſm is, indeed, ſo ſubtily powerful, that it is capable of inflaming the coldeſt mind. The mildeſt and the moſt rational diſpoſitions have been occaſionally injured by its heat. The rapidity of its progreſs certainly depends, in a great degree, on the nature of the materials on which it acts; but, like every dangerous conflagration, its firſt appearances ſhould be watched, and every means taken to extinguiſh its flames. The extinction is, perhaps, moſt happily and readily effected by thoſe counteractions which the common occupations, and daily duties of life, produce on the mind when judiciouſly oppoſed to this flagrant evil. Of the advantages, at leaſt, of this reſource, a circumſtance in the hiſtory of the late DR. FOTHERGILL affords a remarkable example. This celebrated phyſician poſſeſſed the greateſt tranquillity of mind; and had obtained ſo compleat a dominion over his paſſions, that he declared to a friend, recently before his death, that he could not recollect a ſingle inſtance, during the whole courſe

however, was at length rouzed; the military were called out; and after many lives had been loſt, the inſurrection was at length ſuppreſſed. On the enſuing day LORD GEORGE GORDON was taken into cuſtody, and committed a priſoner to the Tower. He was afterwards indicted for *High Treaſon*, and acquitted. Many of the rioters were alſo apprehended, and tried under a ſpecial commiſſion, and ſome of them were convicted and executed.

courſe of his life, in which they had been improperly diſturbed. This temper, which was perfectly ſuited to the character of the religion he profeſſed, the tenets of which he ſtrictly practiſed, he maintained on all occaſions; nor was there any thing in his general conduct or manner that betrayed to his moſt familiar friends the leaſt propenſity towards enthuſiaſm; and yet, diſtant as the ſuſpicion muſt be, under theſe circumſtances, that he ſhould ever be under the influence of ſuperſtition, it is well known, that, while he was a ſtudent at *Edinburgh*, where he was diſtinguiſhed for the mildneſs of his manners, and the regularity of his conduct, he one day, in an eccentric ſally of fanaticiſm, ran, almoſt entirely naked, through the ſtreets of that city, warning all its inhabitants of the impending wrath of heaven; and exhorting them, in the moſt ſolemn manner, to avert the approaching danger, by humbly imploring the mercy of an offended Deity. But this religious paroxyſm was of ſhort duration. He was at this time in habits of intimacy with the great characters who then filled the profeſſional chairs of the univerſity, and ardently engaged in the purſuits of ſtudy; and the exerciſes which his daily taſks required, together with the company and converſation of theſe rational, well-informed, and thinking men, preſerved his reaſon, and ſoon

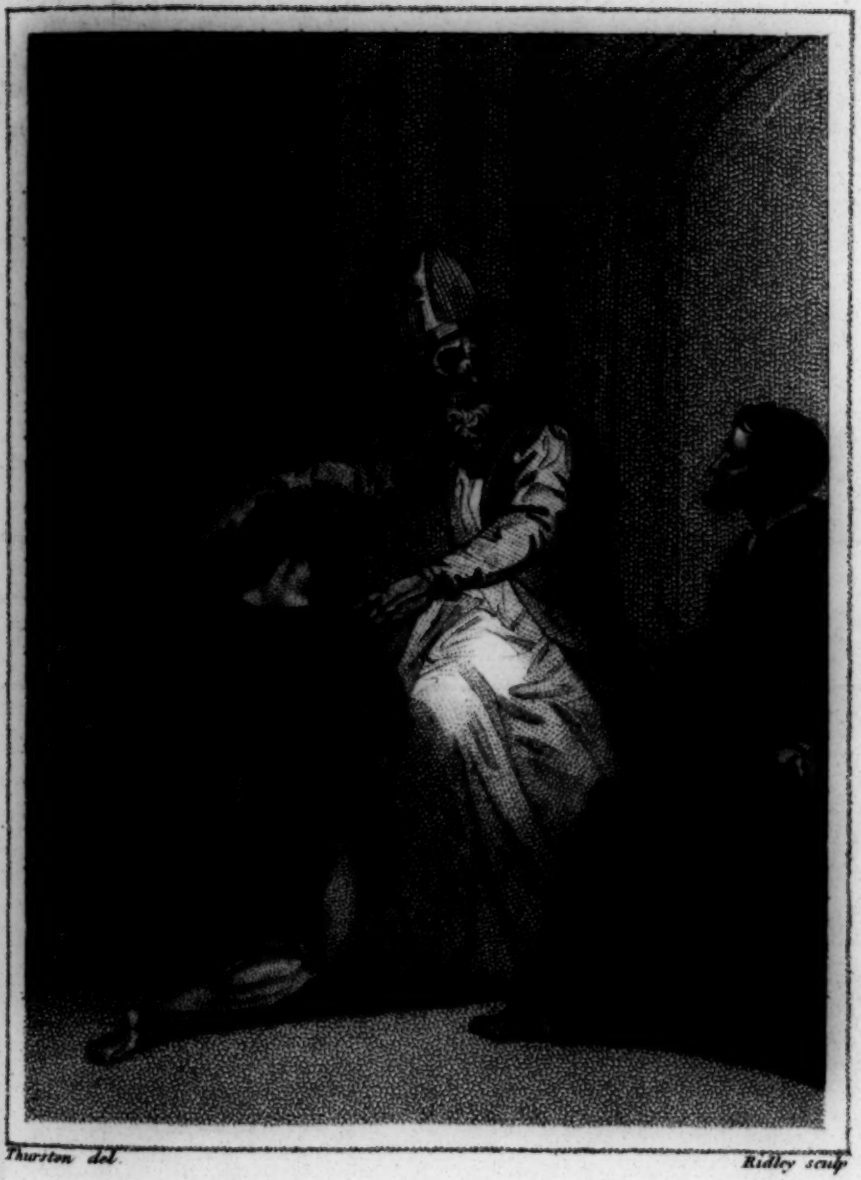
reſtored him to the full and free enjoyment of thoſe faculties, from which both ſcience and humanity afterwards derived ſo many benefits.*

The conduct of ST. FRANCIS, commonly called The *Holy Francis* of *Aſſiſi*, was in ſome degree ſimilar, excepting that the madneſs of this fanatic continued throughout his life, while the delirium of *Fothergill* laſted but a day. This ſaint was born at *Aſſiſi*, in the province of *Umbria*, in the year 1182. His real name of baptiſm was *John*; but, on account of the facility with which he acquired the French language, ſo neceſſary at that time in Italy, eſpecially for the buſineſs for which he was intended, that he was called *Francis*. He is ſaid to have been born with the figure of a croſs on his right ſhoulder, and to have dreamt that he was deſigned by heaven to promote the intereſts of that holy ſign. His diſpoſition was naturally mild, his comprehenſion quick, his feelings acute, his manners eaſy, his imagination vivid, and his paſſions

* DR. LETTSOM has favoured the world with "Memoirs of the Life, both private and profeſſional," of this great and good man; but no ſuch tranſaction as above recorded is there to be found. There are, however, other Accounts of the Life and Character of DR. FOTHERGILL, by *Dr. John Elliott*, by *Dr. William Hurd*, and by *Dr. Gilbert Thompſon*, which the tranſlator has not had the opportunity of conſulting.

paſſions inordinately warm. A careleſs and unreſtrained indulgence of the propenſities of youth had led him into a variety of vicious habits and libertine extravagances, until the Solitude, to which a fit of ſickneſs confined him, brought him to a recollection, and forced him to reflect upon the dangerous tendency of his paſt miſconduct. His mind ſtarted with horror at the dreadful ſcene his retroſpection preſented to his view; and he reſolved to quit the company of his former aſſociates, to reform the profligacy of his life, to reſtore his character, and to ſave, by penitence and prayer, his guilty ſoul. Theſe ſerious reflections wrought ſo powerfully on his dejected mind, that he fell into an extravagant kind of devotion, more reſembling madneſs than religion. Fixing on a paſſage in *St. Matthew*, in which our Saviour deſires his apoſtles to *provide neither gold nor ſilver, nor braſs in their purſes; nor ſcrip for their journey; neither two coats, neither ſhoes nor yet ſtaves*, he was led to conſider a voluntary and abſolute poverty as the eſſence of the goſpel, and to preſcribe this poverty as a ſacred rule both to himſelf and to the few who followed him. He accordingly wandered through the ſtreets of *Aſſiſi* in garments that ſcarcely concealed his nakedneſs, in order, as he ſaid, to inure himſelf to the taunts and ridicule of his former companions, whom he now called the children

children of Sin, and followers of Satan. The father of the young ſaint, ſuppoſing, from theſe extravagances, that the ſickneſs under which he had ſo long laboured had diſordered his intellects, prepared to provide him with ſome proper place of confinement, until time or medical regimen ſhould reſtore him to his right ſenſes; but the ſaint having been informed of his father's friendly intention, declined his paternal care, and quitting his houſe, ſought a ſanctuary in the palace of the biſhop of *Aſſiſi*. The biſhop immediately ſent to the father of the fugitive, and, after hearing him upon the ſubject of his right to provide for the ſafety of his ſon, he turned calmly to the ſon, and deſired him to reply. The ſon immediately tore off the tattered garments which he then wore, and caſting them with ſcorn and indignation at the feet of his aſtoniſhed parent, exclaimed, "*There, take back all your* "*property. You were, indeed, my earthly father,* "*but henceforth I diſclaim you; for I own no* "*father but him who is in heaven.*" The biſhop, either really or affectedly delighted with this unnatural rant of the young enthuſiaſt, threw his own mantle over the ſaint, and exhorted him to perſevere in his holy reſolution, and to cheriſh with encreaſing ardour the divine inſpiration of his pious mind. The frantic youth, animated by the warm approbation of the biſhop, proceeded



Thurston del. Ridley sculp

The Bishop of Assisi throwing his Garment over S.t Francis

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Published July 20 1799 by Vernor & Hood 31 Poultry.

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ceeded in his religious courſe, and, abandoning the city, retired into the deepeſt gloom of an adjacent foreſt, to indulge the fervors of that falſe enthuſiaſm which had overpowered his brain. In this retreat a ſecond viſion confirmed him in his holy office; and being encouraged by Pope INNOCENT THE THIRD, and HONORIOUS, he eſtabliſhed, in the year 1209, the Order of *Saint Francis*. If this ridiculous enthuſiaſt had corrected the extravagances of his overheated imagination, by a cool and temperate exerciſe of his reaſon, by ſtudying, like the celebrated phyſician we have juſt mentioned, ſome liberal ſcience, he might, with the talents he poſſeſſed, have become a really uſeful member of ſociety. But theſe wild ſhoots, if ſuffered to grow to any height, cannot afterwards be eaſily eradicated: and even FOTHERGILL, if he had lived, like FRANCIS, in an age of ſuperſtitious deluſion, and been encouraged to believe the truth of his fanatic conceptions, his temporary phrenzy might have continued through life; and his character, inſtead of being revered as a promoter of an uſeful ſcience, have been held up by an ignorant multitude to the contempt and ridicule of poſterity.

The vacancy of Solitude, by leaving the mind to its own ideas, encourages to a great exceſs

theſe

theſe wild and excentric ſallies of the imagination. He who has an opportunity to indulge, without interruption or reſtraint, the delightful muſings of an excurſive fancy, will ſoon loſe all reliſh for every other pleaſure, and neglect every employment which tends to interrupt the gratification of ſuch an enchanting, though dangerous a propenſity. During the quietude of a ſequeſtered life, Imagination uſurps the throne of Reaſon, and all the feeble faculties of the mind obey her dictates, until her voice becomes deſpotic. If theſe high powers be exerciſed on the agreeable appearances of nature, and the various entertainments poetry, painting, muſic, or any of the elegant arts are capaple of affording,

——— Then the inexpreſſive ſtrain
Diffuſes its enchantment: Fancy dreams
Of ſacred fountains, and Elyſian groves,
And vales of bliſs: the intellectual power
Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,
And ſmiles: the Paſſions, gently ſmooth'd away,
Sink to divine repoſe, and Love and Joy
Alone are waking.

But if the mind, as in the ſolitude of monaſtic ſecluſion, fixes its attention on aſcetic ſubjects, and fires the fancy with unnatural legends, the ſoul, inſtead of ſinking to divine repoſe, feels a morbid melancholy and diſcontented torpor, which

which extinguiſhes all rational reflection, and engenders the moſt fantaſtic viſions.

Turn we awhile on lonely man our eyes,
And ſee what frantic ſcenes of folly riſe:
In ſome dark monaſtery's gloomy cells,
Where formal, ſelf-preſuming virtue dwells,
Bedoz'd with dreams of grace-diſtilling caves,
Of holy puddles, unconſuming graves,
Of animated plaſter, wood, or ſtone,
And mighty cures by ſainted ſinners done.
Permit me, muſe, ſtill farther to explore,
And turn the leaves of SUPERSTITION o'er;
Where wonders upon wonders ever grow;
Chaos of zeal and blindneſs, mirth and woe;
Viſions of devils into monkeys turn'd,
That, hot from hell, roar at a finger burn'd;
Bottles of precious tears that ſaints have wept,
And breath a thouſand years in phials kept;
Sun beams ſent down to prop one friar's ſtaff,
And hell broke looſe to make another laugh;
Obedient fleas, and ſuperſtitious mice;
Confeſſing wolves, and ſanctifying lice; *

Harraſs'd

* The abſurdities here pointed out, great and almoſt incredible as they may appear, were actually the conſequences of an ill-formed and irrational Solitude, in St. Dominick, St. Caſſino, St. Anthony, St. Colman, St. Francis, St. Munna, St. Firman, St. Columba, and Maria de la Viſitation, as may be ſeen by any who has ſufficient phlegm to peruſe "The Lives of the Saints;" and ZIMMERMAN, in his original work on Solitude, has introduced an account of many other extravagances of the ſame kind in the perſons of Molanus, Serapion, Hilarion, Jerome, and others; moſt of which we have forborne to introduce into

Harraſs'd by watchings, abſtinence, and chains,
Strangers to joys, familiar grown with pains;
To all the means of virtue they attend
With ſtricteſt care, and only miſs the end.
For thus, when REASON ſtagnates in the brain,
The dregs of FANCY cloud its pureſt vein.

Men even of ſtrong natural underſtandings, highly improved by education, have, in ſome inſtances, not been able to reſiſt the fatal effects of intenſe application and long continued Solitude. The learned MOLANUS having, during a courſe of many years, detached his mind from all objects of ſenſe, neglected all ſeaſonable and ſalutary devotion, and given an uncontrouled licence to his imagination, fancied, in the latter part of his life, that he was a *barley corn*; and although he received his friends with great courteſy and politeneſs, and converſed upon ſubjects both of ſcience and devotion with great eaſe and ingenuity, he could never afterwards be perſuaded to ſtir from home, leſt, as he expreſſed his apprehenſion, he ſhould be pecked up in the ſtreets, and ſwallowed by a fowl.

The female mind is ſtill more ſubject to theſe deluſions of diſordered fancy; for, as their feelings are more exquiſite, their paſſions warmer, and

into this compilation, from the indecency of their illuſions, and their tendency to corrupt the minds of youth.

and their imaginations more active than thoſe of the other ſex, SOLITUDE, when carried to exceſs, affects them in a much greater degree. Their boſoms are much more ſuſceptible to the injurious influence of ſecluſion, to the contagion of example, and to the dangers of illuſion. This may, perhaps, in ſome degree, account for the ſimilarity of diſpoſition which prevails in cloiſters, and other inſtitutions which confine women entirely to the company of each other. The force of example and habit is, indeed, in ſuch retreats, ſurprizingly powerful. A French medical writer, of great merit, and undoubted veracity, relates, that, in a convent of nuns where the ſiſterhood was unuſually numerous, one of theſe ſecluded fair ones was ſeized with a ſtrange impulſe to mew like a cat; that ſeveral others of the nuns in a ſhort time followed her example; and that at length this unaccountable propenſity became general throughout the convent; the whole ſiſterhood joining, at ſtated periods, in the practice of mewing, and continuing it for ſeveral hours. But of all the extraordinary fancies recorded of the ſex, none can exceed that which CARDAN relates to have happened in one of the convents of Germany during the fifteenth century. One of the nuns, who had long been ſecluded from the ſight of man, was ſeized with the ſtrange propenſity to bite

bite all her companions; and, extraordinary as it may ſeem, this diſpoſition ſpread until the whole houſe was infected with the ſame fury. The account, indeed, ſtates, that this mania extended even beyond the walls of the convent, and that the diſeaſe was conveyed to ſuch a degree from cloiſter to cloiſter, throughout Germany, Holland, and Italy, that the practice at length prevailed in every female convent in Europe.

Theſe inſtances of the pernicious influence of a total dereliction of ſociety, may poſſibly appear to the underſtandings of the preſent generation extravagant and incredible; but they are certainly true; and many others, of a ſimilar nature, might be adduced from the moſt authentic hiſtories of the times. The ſpecies, when prevented from enjoying a free intercourſe and rational ſociety with each other, almoſt change their nature; and the mind, feeding continually on the melancholy muſings of the imagination in the cold and chearleſs regions of Solitude, engenders humours of the moſt excentric caſt. Excluded from thoſe ſocial communications which nature enjoins, with no means of gratifying the underſtanding, amuſing the ſenſes, or intereſting the affections, fancy roves at large into unknown ſpheres, and endeavours to find in ideal forms entertain-

ment

ment and delight. Angelic viſions, infernal phantoms, amazing prodigies, the deluſions of alchemy, the frenzies of philoſophy, and the madneſs of metaphyſics, fill the diſordered brain. The intellect faſtens upon ſome abſurd idea, and foſters it with the fondeſt affection, until its encreaſing magnitude ſubdues the remaining powers of ſenſe and reaſon. The ſlighteſt retroſpect into the conduct of the ſolitary profeſſions of every religious ſyſtem, proves the lamentable dangers to which they expoſe their mental faculties, by excluding themſelves from the intercourſes of rational ſociety. From the prolific womb of Solitude ſprung all the myſterious ravings and ſenſeleſs doctrines of the *New Platoniſts*. The ſame cauſe devoted the monks and anchorites of the Chriſtian church to folly and fanaticiſm. *Fakirs*, *Bramins*, and every other tribe of religious enthuſiaſts, originated from the ſame ſource. By abandoning the pleaſures of ſociety, and renouncing the feelings of nature, they ſacrificed REASON upon the altar of SUPERSTITION, and ſupplied its place with extatic fancies and melancholy muſings. There is nothing more evident, than that our holy religion, in its original conſtitution, was ſet ſo far apart from all refined ſpeculations, that it ſeemed in a manner diametrically oppoſite to it. The Great Founder of Chriſtianity gave one ſimple rule of life

life to all men; but his diſciples, anxious to indulge the natural vanity of the human mind, and miſled, in ſome degree, by the falſe philoſophy which at that period overſpread the heathen world, introduced various doctrines of ſalvation, and new ſchemes of faith. Bigotry, a ſpecies of ſuperſtition hardly known before, took place in mens affections, and armed them with new jealouſies againſt each other: barbarous terms and idioms were every day invented; monſtrous definitions impoſed, and hoſtilities, the fierceſt imaginable, exerciſed on each other by the contending parties. Fanaticiſm, with all the train of Viſions, Prophecies, Dreams, Charms, Miracles, and Exerciſes, ſucceeded; and ſpiritual feats of the moſt abſurd and ridiculous nature were performed in monaſteries, or up and down, by their mendicant or itinerant prieſts and ghoſtly miſſionaries. Solitude impreſſed the principles upon which theſe extravagancies were founded with uncommon force on the imagination; and the mind, working itſelf into holy fervors and inſpirations, gave birth to new extravagances. The cauſes which operated on the minds of men to produce ſuch ridiculous effects, acted with double force on the ardent temper, warm imagination, and exceſſive ſenſibility of the female world. That which was mere phantaſy with the one ſex, became phrenzy with the other.

Women, indeed, are, according to the opinion of PLATO, the nurſes of fanaticiſm; and their favourite theme is that which has been dignified by the appellation of *a ſublime paſſion for piety*; an ardent and refined love of heaven; but which, in fact, is only the natural effects of the heart, ſwoln intumeſcently by an unreined, prolific, and too ardent imagination. Inſtances of this kind are diſcoverable in all the accounts that have been publiſhed of the holy fervors of theſe penitents, particularly in thoſe of CATHARINE of Sienna, of JOAN of Cambray, of ANGELINA of Foligny, of MATILDA of Saxony, of MARIA of the Incarnation, of MARY MAGDALEN of Pazzio, of GERTRUDE of Saxony, and many others. The celebrated ARMELLE, who was born in the year 1606, at *Campenac*, in the dioceſe of *St. Malo*, and who died at *Vannes* in the year 1671, poſſeſſed great perſonal beauty, a quick and lively mind, and an uncommon tenderneſs of heart. Her parents, who were honeſt and induſtrious villagers, placed her as a menial ſervant in the houſe of a neighbouring gentleman, with whom ſhe lived for five and thirty years, in the practice of the moſt exemplary piety, and extraordinary virtue: at leaſt, according to the accounts which he gave from time to time of her conduct. During the time ſhe reſided with this gentleman, his groom finding the kitchen door faſtened,

faſtened, had the curioſity to peep through the key-hole, where he diſcovered the pious maid in a paroxyſm of divine extacy performing the humble office of ſpitting a capon. The agitation of this holy ſpirit ſo affected the mind of the aſtoniſhed youth, that, it is ſaid by the Urſaline ſiſter who has written the life of this great luminary of French ſanctity, under the title of *The School for the Love of God*, he became immediately enamoured with the beauties of religion, and renouncing the pomps and vanities of the world, entered into a monaſtery at the ſame time that his holy companion thought proper to withdraw from future obſervation into the convent of *Vannes*, where ſhe devoted the remainder of her life, and died, as it is reported, of an exceſs of divine love. The youthful days of ARMELLE had been paſſed in almoſt total ſolitude; for her occupation at the houſe in which ſhe was placed by her parents was confined entirely to the kitchen, and ſhe had ſcarcely any other intercourſe than with its furniture. It appears, however, from the hiſtory of her life, that ſhe was from her childhood exceſſively fond of reciting an *ave* or *pater noſter*; and while occupied in tending the flocks, her original employment, amuſed herſelf in telling her roſary, " by which means," ſays the Urſaline ſiſter, " ſhe made, even in her paſ-
" toral ſtate of ſimplicity and ignorance, ſuch
" great

Thurston del. Ridley sculp

Armelle Nicholas, telling her Rosary.

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" great advances in divine love, that the firſt
" moment ſhe was allowed to pay her adoration
" to the CRUCIFIX, the fervency of her pious
" paſſion burſt forth with ſuch extacy, that ſhe
" eagerly ſnatched the holy object to her arms,
" and embraced it with a tranſport ſo warmly
" affectionate, that ſtreams of tenderneſs ruſhed
" from her eyes."

It is truly ſaid by a celebrated Engliſh writer, to be " of the utmoſt importance to guard againſt extremes of every kind in religion. We muſt beware, leſt by ſeeking to avoid one rock we ſplit upon another. It has been long the ſubject of remark, that SUPERSTITION and ENTHUSIASM are two capital ſources of deluſion: Superſtition, on the one hand, attaching men with immoderate zeal to the ritual and external points of religion; and Enthuſiaſm, on the other, directing their whole attention to internal emotions and myſtical communications with the ſpiritual world; while neither the one nor the other has paid ſufficient regard to the great moral duties of the Chriſtian life. But running with intemperate eagerneſs from theſe two great abuſes of religion, men have neglected to obſerve that there are extremes oppoſite to each of them, into which they are in hazard of precipitating themſelves. Thus the horror of Superſtition

has ſometimes reached ſo far as to produce contempt for all external inſtitutions; as if it were poſſible for Religion to ſubſiſt in the world without forms of worſhip, or public acknowledgment of God. It has alſo happened, that ſome who, in the main, are well affected to the cauſe of goodneſs, obſerving that perſons of a devout turn have at times been carried away by warm affections into unjuſtifiable exceſſes, have thence haſtily concluded that all DEVOTION was a-kin to Enthuſiaſm; and ſeparating Religion totally from the heart and affections, have reduced it to a frigid obſervance of what they call the rules of Virtue." Theſe extremes are to be carefully avoided. True devotion is rational and well founded; and conſiſts in the lively exerciſe of that affection which we owe to the Supreme Being, comprehending ſeveral emotions of the heart, which all terminate in the ſame great object.

Theſe are among the evils which an irrational Solitude is capable of producing upon an unreſtrained and miſdirected imagination: but I do not mean to contend indiſcriminately, that Solitude is generally to be conſidered as dangerous to the free indulgence of this delightful faculty of the mind. Solitude well choſen, and rationally purſued, is ſo far from being either the open

enemy

enemy or the treacherous friend of a firm and fine imagination, that it ripens its earlieſt ſhoots, ſtrengthens their growth, and contributes to the production of its richeſt and moſt valuable fruits. To him who has acquired the happy art of enjoying in Solitude the charms of Nature, and of indulging the powers of Fancy without impairing the faculty of Reaſon,

——————— Whate'er adorns
The princely dome, the column, and the arch,
The breathing marble, and the ſculptur'd gold,
Beyond the proud poſſeſſor's narrow claim,
His happy breaſt enjoys. For him the Spring
Diſtills her dews, and from the ſilken gem
Its lucid leaves unfolds: for him the hand
Of Autumn tinges every fertile branch
With blooming gold, and bluſhes like the morn.
Each paſſing hour ſheds tribute from her wings;
And ſtill new beauties meet his lonely walk,
And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze
Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
The ſetting ſun's effulgence, not a ſtrain
From all the tenants of the warbling ſhade
Aſcends, but whence his boſom can partake
Freſh pleaſure, unreprov'd. Nor thence partakes
Freſh pleaſure only: for the attentive mind,
By this harmonious action on her powers,
Becomes herſelf harmonious. Wont ſo oft
In outward things to meditate the charm
Of ſacred Order, ſoon ſhe ſeeks at home
To find a kindred order, to exert
Within herſelf this elegance of love,

This fair inſpir'd delight: her *tempered* powers
Refine at length; and every paſſion wears
A chaſter, milder, more attractive mien.
But if to ampler proſpects, if to gaze
On Nature's face, where, negligent of all
Theſe leſſer graces, ſhe aſſumes the port
Of that Eternal Majeſty that weigh'd
The world's foundations, if to theſe the mind
Exalts her daring eye, then mightier far
Will be the change, and nobler. Would the forms
Of ſervile cuſtom cramp her generous powers?
Would ſordid policies, the barbarous growth
Of ignorance and rapine, bow her down
To tame purſuits, to indolence and fear?
Lo! ſhe appeals to NATURE, to the winds
And rolling waves, the ſun's unwearied courſe,
The elements and ſeaſons: all declare
For what the eternal Maker has ordain'd
The powers of Man. We feel within ourſelves
His energy divine: he tells the heart
He meant, he made us to behold and love
What he beholds and loves, the general orb
Of Life and Being; to be great like him,
Beneficent and active. Thus the men
Whom NATURE'S WORKS CAN CHARM, with God himſelf
Hold converſe; grow familiar, day by day,
With his conceptions, act upon his plan,
And form to his the reliſh of their ſouls.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

THE EFFECTS OF SOLITUDE ON A MELANCHOLY MIND.

A DISPOSITION to enjoy the ſilence of ſequeſtered Solitude, and a growing diſtaſte of the noiſy tumults of public life, are the earlieſt and moſt general ſymptoms of approaching melancholy. The heart, on which felicity was uſed to ſit enthroned, becomes ſenſeleſs to the touch of pleaſure; the airy wing of high delight ſinks proſtrate to the earth on broken pinions; and care, anxiety, chagrin, and regret, loads the mind with diſtempering ideas, and renders it chearleſs and forlorn. The dawning ſun and heaven-lighted day give no pleaſure to the ſickened ſenſes of the unhappy ſufferer. His only pleaſure is to "commune with his own griefs;" and for this purpoſe he ſeeks ſome gloomy glen,

"Where bitter boding Melancholy reigns
"O'er heavy ſighs and care-diſorder'd thoughts."

But a mind thus diſpoſed, however it may for a time conſole its ſorrows* by retiring from the

 world,

* METODORUS, in one of *Seneca's* Epiſtles, ſays, that *there is always a mixture of pleaſure in the indulgence of ſorrow:* And

world, thereby becomes more weak and helpleſs. Solitude in ſuch caſes increaſes the diſorder while it ſoftens its effects. To eradicate the ſeeds of this dreadful malady, the imagination ſhould be impreſſed with ſome new, contrary, and more powerful bias than that which ſways the mind, which can only be turned from its courſe of thought by ſhifting the objects of its reflection, and giving entrance to new deſires. A melancholy mind, therefore, ſhould be weaned by degrees from its diſpoſition to ſolitude, ſhould be agreeably interrupted in its muſings, and be induced to reliſh the varying pleaſures of the world. But, above all, thoſe ſcenes and ſubjects which have any connection, however remotely, with the cauſe of the complaint, muſt be cautiouſly avoided. The ſeeds of this dreadful malady are in general very deeply planted in the conſtitution of the patient, however accidental the circumſtances may be which call it forth; and therefore the mind, even when relieved from its oppreſſion, is, if left to itſelf, always

And MONTAIGNE was of opinion, that there is deſign, conſent, complacency in giving a man's ſelf up to MELANCHOLY; ſome ſhadow of delight and delicacy, which ſmiles upon and flatters us even in the very lap of Miſery. Some characters even feed upon it, as OVID obſerves;

"——————— eſt quædam flere voluptas:"

"A certain kind of pleaſure is to weep."

always in danger of relapſing into its former habit. This circumſtance alone is ſufficient to ſhow how unfriendly SOLITUDE muſt be to the cure of this complaint. If, indeed, the patient be ſo far gone as to leave no hope of recovery; if his deſponding heart be incapable of no new impreſſion; if his mind forgoes all cuſtom of mirth; if he refuſe to partake of any healthful exerciſe or agreeable recreation; and the ſoul ſinks day after day into deeper dejection, and threatens nature with madneſs or with death, SOLITUDE is the only reſource. When melancholy ſeizes to a certain degree the mind of AN ENGLISHMAN, it almoſt uniformly leads him to put a period to his exiſtence; while the worſt effect it produces on A FRENCHMAN, is to induce him to turn *Carthuſian*. Such diſſimilar effects, proceeding from the operation of the ſame cauſe, in different perſons, can only be accounted for from the greater opportunities which there is in *France* than in *England* to hide the ſorrows of the mind from the inſpection of the world. An Engliſh hypochondriaſt would, perhaps, ſeldom deſtroy himſelf, if there were in *England* any monaſtic inſtitution, to which he could fly from the eye of public obſervation.

The mind, in proportion as it loſes its proper tone, and natural elaſticity, decreaſes in its at-

tachments to Society, and wiſhes to recede from the world and its concerns.* There is no diſorder of the mind, among all the various cauſes by which it may be affected, that deſtroys its force and activity ſo entirely as melancholy. It unties, as it were, all the relations, both phyſical and moral, of which Society, in its moſt perfect ſtate, conſiſts, and ſets the ſoul free from all ſenſe of obligation. The private link which unites the ſpecies is deſtroyed; all inclination to the common intercourſes of life is loſt; and the only remaining diſpoſition is for SOLITUDE. It is for this reaſon that melancholy perſons are continually adviſed to frequent the theatre, maſquerades, operas, balls, and other places of public

* The diſguſt which a melancholy mind feels of the world and its concerns, is finely deſcribed by SHAKESPEARE, in the ſpeech which HAMLET makes to the two courtiers *Roſincrantz* and *Guildenſtern*—"I have of late, but wherefore I know not, loſt all my mirth, forgone all cuſtom of exerciſe: and, indeed, it goes ſo heavily with my diſpoſition, that this goodly frame, THE EARTH, ſeems to me a ſteril promontory; this moſt excellent canopy, THE AIR, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majeſtical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and peſtilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is MAN! how noble in reaſon! how infinite in faculties! in form, and moving, how expreſs and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehenſion, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! and yet, to me, what is this quinteſſence of duſt? MAN delights not me,—nor WOMAN neither.

public diverſion; to amuſe themſelves at home with cards, dice, or other games; or to infuſe from the eyes of female beauty new life into their drooping ſouls. Certain it is, that great advantages may be derived by detaching the mind from thoſe objects by which it is tortured and conſumed; but to run indiſcriminately, and with injudicious eagerneſs, into the purſuit of pleaſures, without any pre-diſpoſition to enjoy them, may rather tend to augment than diminiſh the diſeaſe.

The eye of Melancholy views every object on its darkeſt and moſt unfavourable ſide, and apprehends diſaſtrous conſequences from every occurrence. Theſe gloomy perceptions, which increaſe as the feelings become more indolent, and the conſtitution more morbid, bring on habitual uneaſineſs and chagrin upon the mind, and render every injury, however ſmall and trifling it may be, irkſome and inſupportable. A ſettled dejection enſues; and the miſerable patient avoids every ſcene in which his muſings may be liable to interruption; the few enjoyments he is yet capable of feeling in any degree impeded; or which may call upon him to make the ſlighteſt exertion; and, by withdrawing himſelf from Society into Solitude, neglects the exerciſes and recreations by which his diſeaſe migh be relieved.

Inſtead of endeavouring to enlighten the dark gloom which involves his mind, and ſubdues his his ſoul, by regarding with a favourable eye all that gives a true value and high reliſh to men of ſound minds and lively diſpoſitions, he fondly follows the phantom which miſleads him, and thereby ſinks himſelf more deeply into the moody fanes of irremeable melancholy: and if the bright rays of life and happineſs penetrate by chance into the obſcurity of his retreat, inſtead of feeling any ſatisfaction from the perception of chearfulneſs and content, he quarrels with the poſſeſſors of them, and converts their enjoyments into ſubjects of grievance, in order to torment himſelf.*

Unfavourable,

* We cannot refuſe ourſelves the pleaſure of preſenting to our readers the following beautiful paſſage upon this ſubject from FITZOSBORNE'S LETTERS. "I am perſuaded," ſays this elegant writer, "this diſguſt of life is frequently indulged out of a principle of mere vanity. It is eſteemed as a mark of uncommon refinement, and as placing a man above the ordinary level of his ſpecies, to ſeem ſuperior to the vulgar feelings of happineſs. True good ſenſe, however, moſt certainly conſiſts not in deſpiſing, but in managing, our ſtock of life to the beſt advantage, as a chearful acquieſcence in the meaſures of Providence is one of the ſtrongeſt ſymptoms of a well-conſtituted mind. Self wearineſs is a circumſtance that ever attends folly; and to condemn our being is the greateſt and, indeed, the peculiar infirmity of human nature. It is a noble ſentiment which TULLY puts into the mouth of CATO, in his Treatiſe upon Old

Unfavourable, however, as a dreary and diſconſolate Solitude certainly is to the recovery of a

 mind

Old Age. "*Non lubet mihi,*" ſays that venerable Roman: "*deplorare vitam, quod multi, et ii docti, ſæpe fecerunt; neque me vixiſſe pœnitet: quoniam ita vixi, ut non fruſtra me natam exiſtimem.*" It is in the power, indeed, of but a very ſmall portion of mankind to act the ſame glorious part that afforded ſuch high ſatisfaction to this diſtinguiſhed patriot; but the number is yet far more inconſiderable of thoſe who cannot, in any ſtation, ſecure themſelves a ſufficient fund of complacency to render life juſtly valuable. Who is it that is placed out of the reach of the higheſt of all gratifications, thoſe of the generous affections, and that cannot provide for his own happineſs by contributing ſomething to the welfare of others? As this diſeaſe of the mind generally breaks out with the moſt violence in thoſe who are ſuppoſed to be endowed with a greater delicacy of taſte and reaſon than is the uſual allotment of their fellow creatures, one may aſk them, whether there is a ſatiety in the purſuits of uſeful knowledge, or if one can be weary of benefiting mankind? Will not the fine arts ſupply a laſting feaſt to the mind? Or can there be wanting a pleaſurable enjoyment, ſo long as there remains even one advantageous truth to be diſcovered or confirmed? To complain that life has no joys, while there is a creature whom we can relieve by our bounty, aſſiſt by our counſels, or enliven by our preſence, is to lament the loſs of that which we poſſeſs, and is juſt as rational as to die for thirſt with the cup in our hands. But the misfortune is, when a man is ſettled into a habit of receiving all his pleaſures from the more ſelfiſh indulgencies, he wears out of his mind the reliſh of of every nobler enjoyment, at the ſame time that his powers of the ſenſual kind are growing more languid by each repetition. It is no wonder, therefore, he ſhould fill up the meaſure of his gratification long before he has compleated the circle of his duration; and either wretchedly ſit down the remainder of his days in melancholy retirement, or raſhly throw them up in deſpair."

mind labouring under this grievous affliction, it is far preferable to the ſociety of licentious companions, and to wild ſcenes of inebriating diſſipation. Worldly pleaſures, and ſenſual gratifications of every deſcription, when intemperately purſued, only drive a melancholy mind into a more abject ſtate of dejection. It is from rational recreation, and temperate pleaſures alone, that an afflicted mind can receive amuſement and delight. The only ſcenes by which the mudded current of his mind can be cleared, or his ſtagnated ſyſtem of pleaſure refreſhed, muſt be calm, yet cheerful, and temperate, yet gay. Melancholy is of a ſedate and penſive character, and flies from whatever is hurrying and tumultuous. How frequently do men of contemplative diſpoſitions conceive a diſtaſte for the world, only becauſe they have unthinkingly engaged ſo ardently in the purſuits of pleaſure, or of buſineſs, that they have been prevented, for a length of time, from collecting their ſcattered ideas, and indulging their natural habits of reflection. But, in endeavouring to reclaim a melancholy mind, it is neceſſary to attend to the feelings of the heart, as well as to the peculiar temper of the mind. A gloomy, diſturbed, unquiet mind, is highly irritated, and its diſeaſe of courſe increaſed, by the company and converſation of thoſe whoſe ſenſeleſs boſoms are incapable of feeling the griefs it endures, or the

the complaints it utters. This, indeed, is another cauſe which drives melancholy perſons from Society into Solitude; for how few are there whoſe tenderneſs leads them to ſympathize with a brother in diſtreſs, or to contribute a kind aid to eradicate the thorns which rankle in his heart! Robuſt characters, in whoſe boſoms nature has planted the impenetrable ſhield of unvarying health, as well as thoſe whoſe minds are engroſſed by the charms of uninterrupted proſperity, can form no idea of the ſecret but ſevere agonies which ſhake the ſyſtem of valetudinary men; nor feel any compaſſion for the tortures which accompany a wounded and afflicted ſpirit, until the convulſive frame proclaims the dreadful malady, or increaſing melancholy ſacrifices its victim on the altar of ſelf deſtruction. The gay aſſociates of the unfeeling world view a companion ſuffering under the worſt of nature's evils, with cold indifference or affected concern; or, in the career of pleaſure, overlook the miſeries he feels, until they hear that exhauſted woe has induced him to brave the anger of the Almighty, and to ruſh from mortal miſery, uncalled, into the awful preſence of his Creator. Dreadful ſtate! The ſecrecy and ſilence, indeed, with which perſons of this deſcription conceal the pangs that torture their minds, is among the moſt dangerous ſymptoms of the diſeaſe. It

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is not, indeed, eaſy to hide from the anxious and attentive eye of real friendſhip the feelings of the heart; but to the careleſs and indifferent multitude of common acquaintances, the countenance may wear the appearance not only of compoſure, but even of gaity, while the ſoul is inwardly ſuffering the keeneſt anguiſh of unutterable woe. The celebrated CARLINI, a French actor of great merit, and in high reputation with the public, for the life, whim, frolic, and vivacity with which he nightly entertained the Pariſian audiences, applied to a phyſician, to whom he was not perſonally known, for advice, and repreſented to him that he was ſubject to attacks of the deepeſt melancholy. The phyſician adviſed him to amuſe his mind by ſcenes of pleaſure, and particularly directed him to frequent the Italian Comedy; "for," continued he, "your diſtemper muſt be rooted, indeed, if the acting of the lively CARLINI does not remove it." "Alas!" exclaimed the unhappy patient, "I am the very CARLINI whom you recommend me to ſee; and while I am capable of filling *Paris* with mirth and laughter, I am myſelf the dejected victim of melancholy and chagrin."

Painful as it may be to a perſon who is labouring under the oppreſſion of melancholy, to aſſociate with thoſe who are incapable of ſympathizing

ing with his feelings, or who neglect to compaſſionate his ſufferings, yet he ſhould not fly from the preſence of men into Solitude; for Solitude will unavoidably aggravate and augment his diſtreſs, inaſmuch as it tends to encourage that muſing and ſoliloquy to which melancholy is invariably prone. It is the moſt dangerous reſource to which he can fly: for, while it ſeems to promiſe the faireſt hopes of relief, it betrays the confidence repoſed in it; and, inſtead of ſhielding its votary from that conflict which diſturbs his repoſe, it renders him defenceleſs, and delivers him unarmed to his bittereſt enemy.

The boldeſt ſpirits, and firmeſt nerves, cannot withſtand the inroads of melancholy merely by their own ſtrength. It damps the courage of the moſt enterprizing mind, and makes him who was before, upon all occaſions, fearleſs and unawed, ſhrink even from the preſence of his fellow creatures. Company of every deſcription becomes diſpleaſing to him; he dreads the idea of viſiting; and if he is induced to quit the domeſtic Solitude into which he retires, it is only when the glorious, but to him offenſive, light of heaven is concealed in congenial darkneſs; and the ſhades of night hide him from the obſervation of man. An invitation to ſocial entertainment alarms his mind; the viſit even of a friend becomes painful to his feelings;

feelings; and he deteſts every thing which lightens the gloom in which he wiſhes to live, or which tends to diſturb his privacy, or remove him from his retreat.

ROUSSEAU, towards the latter part of his life, abandoned all intercourſe with Society, under a notion, which was the effect of his melancholy diſpoſition, that the world had conceived an unconquerable antipathy againſt him; and that his former friends, particularly HUME, and ſome philoſophers in France, not only had entered into a confederacy to deſtroy his glory and repoſe, but to take away his life. On departing from *England*, he paſſed through *Amiens*, where he met with GRESSET, who interrogated him about his misfortunes, and the controverſies in which he had been engaged; but ROUSSEAU only anſwered, "You have got the art of making a parrot ſpeak, but you are not yet poſſeſſed of the ſecret of giving language to a bear:" And when the magiſtrates of the city wiſhed to confer on him ſome marks of their eſteem, he refuſed all their offers, and conſidered theſe flattering civilities like the inſults which were laviſhed in the ſame form on the celebrated SANCHO in the iſland of *Barataria*. To ſuch extent, indeed, did his diſordered imagination carry him, that he thought one part of the people looked upon him like

LAZARILLO

LAZARILLO DE TORMES, who, being fixed to the bottom of a tub, with only his head out of the water, was carried from one town to another to amuſe the vulgar. His bad health, a ſtrong and melancholy imagination, a too nice ſenſibility, a jealous diſpoſition, joined with philoſophic vanity, and his uncommon devotion to ſolitude, tended to prepoſſeſs him with thoſe wrong and whimſical ideas. But it muſt be confeſſed, that the oppoſition he met with from different ranks of perſons, at ſeveral periods of his life, was extremely ſevere. He was driven at one time from *France*, in which he had before been diſtinguiſhed by his writings, and highly honoured. At another time he was chaced from *Geneva*, the place of his nativity, and of his warmeſt affection. He was exiled from *Berne* with diſgrace; expelled, with ſome appearance of injuſtice, from *Neufchatel*; and even baniſhed from his tranquil ſolitude on the borders of the lake of *Bienne*. His diſpoſition, therefore, to avoid ſociety, muſt not be entirely attributed to his melancholy diſpoſition; nor his love of ſolitude to a miſanthropic mind. Every acute and ſcientific obſerver of the life and character of this extraordinary man, will immediately perceive that the ſeeds of that melancholy diſpoſition, and fretful temper, which through life deſtroyed his repoſe, were ſown by nature in his conſtitution.

conſtitution. He confeſſes, indeed, to uſe his own words, that "a proud miſanthropy, and peculiar contempt for the riches and pleaſures of the world, conſtituted the chief traits of his character." This proud ſpirit and contemptuous mind were mixed with an extreme ſenſibility of heart, and an exceſſive indolence of diſpoſition; and his body, which was naturally feeble, ſuffered, from ill health, the keeneſt agonies, and moſt excruciating diſorders, to which the human frame is incident. Perſecution alſo had levelled the moſt pointed and ſeverely-barbed ſhafts againſt him; and he was forced to endure, amidſt the pangs of poverty, and the ſorrows of ſickneſs, all that envy, hatred, and malice, could inflict. It has been ſaid, that the perſecutions he experienced, were not ſo much excited by the new dogmas, or excentric paradoxes, which, both on politics and religion, pervade all his writings, as by the refinement of his extraordinary talents, the wonderful ſplendor of his eloquence, and the increaſing extent of his fame. His adverſaries certainly purſued him not only with bigotry and intolerance, but with an inconſiſtency which revealed, in a great degree, the ſecret motives by which they were actuated; for they condemned, with the ſharpeſt virulence, the freedom of his religious tenets, even in places where the religious creed of VOLTAIRE was held in the higheſt

higheſt admiration, and where atheiſm had collected the moſt learned advocates, and diſplayed the very ſtandard of infidelity and diſbelief. Harraſſed by the frowns of fortune, and purſued with unrelenting enmity by men whoſe ſympathy and kindneſs he had anxiouſly endeavoured to obtain, it is ſcarcely ſurprizing that the chearfulneſs of his diſpoſition, and the kindneſs of his heart, ſhould be ſubdued by thoſe ſentiments of averſion and antipathy which he fancied moſt of his intimates entertained againſt him: And the invectives from the pen of his former friend and confidant, VOLTAIRE, together with many others that might be adduced, particularly the letter which was fabricated in the name of the KING OF PRUSSIA, for the purpoſe of expoſing him to ridicule, prove that his ſuſpicions on this ſubject were not unfounded. The voice, indeed, of mankind, ſeems ready to exclaim, that this excentric philoſopher was not only a miſanthrope, but a madman; but thoſe who are charitably diſpoſed, will recollect that he was a martyr to ill health; that nature had beſtowed upon him a diſcontented mind; that his nerves were in a continued ſtate of irritation; and that to preſerve equanimity of temper, when goaded by the ſhafts of calumny and malice, requires ſuch an extraordinary degree of fortitude and paſſive courage as few individuals are found

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to poſſeſs. His faults are remembered, while the wonderful bloom, and uncommon vigour of his genius, are forgotten or concealed. The production from which his merits are in general eſtimated, is that which is called "*The Confeſſions*;" a work written under the preſſure of calamity, in ſickneſs, and in ſorrow; amidſt fears, diſtreſſes and ſufferings; when the infirmities which accompany old age, and the debility which attends continual ill health, had injured the tone of his mind, overpowered his reaſon, and perverted his feelings to ſuch a degree, as to create an almoſt total transformation of the character of the man, and deprive him of his identity: but this degrading work ought, in candour, to be conſidered as a deplorable inſtance of the weakneſs of human nature, and how unable it is to ſupport its own dignity when attacked by the adverſities of fortune, and the malice of mankind. The greatneſs of ROUSSEAU ought to be erected on a different baſis: for his earlieſt works are certainly ſufficient to ſupport the extent of his fame as an author, however they may on particular ſubjects expoſe his integrity as a man.*

The

* JEAN JAQUES ROUSSEAU was born at *Geneva*, on the 28th of June, 1712, of extremely obſcure parents, and was led to his fondneſs for learning by accidentally finding a *Plutarch* and a *Tacitus* in his father's workſhop. He died at *Paris* on the 2d of July, 1778.

The anxieties which a vehemence of imagination, and a tender texture of the nervous ſyſtem, at all times produce, are highly injurious to the faculties of the mind; and when accompanied by ſickneſs or by ſorrow, wear out the intellect in proportion to its vigour and activity. To uſe the popular metaphor upon this ſubject, "The ſword becomes too ſharp for the ſcabbard;" and the body and the mind are thereby expoſed to mutual deſtruction. The tear of pity would drop even from the jaundiced eye of jealouſy, were it capable of diſcerning the direful pangs with which the ſucceſsful candidates for fame purchaſe their envied pre-eminence. Calumny would daſh its poiſoned chalice to the ground, were the heart-rending ſighs which but too often accompany the labours of genius more generally known. Diſeaſe, anxiety, pain, languor, deſpondency, and a long train of oppreſſive maladies, are the uſual fruits of intenſe application and continual ſtudy: the faculties frequently ſink under their own exertions; and the bright proſpects which hope ſometimes deluſively opens to the view often cloſe in eternal darkneſs. Were theſe circumſtances recollected, envy would not only withhold its ſting, and malice forego its miſchief, but liſten to the voice of pity, and relentingly offer to the victim their kindeſt ſolace and ſupport. Of the truth of theſe obſervations

the

the celebrated HALLER furniſhes a memorable, but melancholy inſtance. Urged by the love of fame to proſecute his various ſtudies with unremitting ſeverity, his ſpirits became at length ſo terribly depreſſed, that the great powers of his once vigorous and exalted mind were impeded in their exertion, until opium, or ſome other medicine of a ſimilar nature, releaſed them from the melancholy by which they were ſubdued. So thick, indeed, was the gloom which overſpread his mind, that he frequently fancied a vaſt abyſs was opening before him, and that demons were waiting to drag him down, in order to inflict the moſt direful tortures on his ſoul, for the moral errors into which he conceived he had been involuntarily betrayed.

Religious melancholy is, of all other deſcriptions of this dreadful diſeaſe, moſt heightened and aggravated by Solitude. The dreadful idea of having irretrievably loſt the divine favour, and of being an object unworthy of the interceſſion of our Saviour, inceſſantly haunts the mind labouring under religious deſpondency; and the imagination being left, in ſolitude, entirely to its own workings, encreaſes the horrors which ſuch thoughts muſt unavoidably inſpire.

Her laſh TISIPHONE that moment ſhakes;
The *mind* ſhe ſcourges with a thouſand ſnakes,

And

And to her aid, with many a thundering yell,
Calls her dire ſiſters from the gulph of hell!

Theſe mental tortures, even when heightened by the gloomineſs of ſolitude, are frequently ſtill further increaſed by the miſchievous doctrines of bigoted prieſts, who, by miſtaking the effects of nervous derangement, or theological errors, for the compunctious viſitings of a guilty mind, eſtabliſh and mature, by the injudicious application of ſcriptural texts, and precepts of caſuiſtry, the very diſeaſe which they thus ignorantly and preſumptuouſly endeavour to remove. The wound, thus tainted by the moſt virulent and corroſive of the intellectual poiſons, becomes extremely difficult to cure. The pure and uncontaminated tenets of the Chriſtian faith, furniſh, perhaps, the ſureſt antidotes; and when theſe balms of true comfort are infuſed by ſuch enlightened and diſcerning minds as LUTHER, TILLOTSON, and CLARKE, the moſt rational hope may be entertained of a ſpeedy recovery. The writings of theſe holy teachers confirm the truth of the obſervation, that the deleterious gloom of ſuperſtition aſſumes a darker aſpect in the ſhades of retirement, and they uniformly exhort the unhappy victims of this religious error to avoid ſolitude as the moſt certain enemy of this dreadful infirmity.

SOLITUDE,

SOLITUDE, however, is not the only ſoil in which this noxious weed ſprings up, and ſpreads around its baleful glooms; it ſometimes appears with deeply rooted violence in minds unuſed to retirement of every kind. In the courſe of my practice as a phyſician, I was called upon to attend a young lady, whoſe natural diſpoſition had been extremely chearful, until a ſevere fit of ſickneſs damped her ſpirits, and rendered her averſe to all thoſe lively pleaſures which faſcinate the youthful mind. The debility of her frame, and the change of her temper, were not ſufficiently attended to in the early ſtages of her convaleſcence. The anxiety of her mind was viſible in the altered features of her face; and ſhe was frequently heard to expreſs a melancholy regret, that ſhe had conſumed ſo many hours in the frivolous, though innocent, amuſements of the age. Time increaſed, by almoſt imperceptible degrees, theſe ſymptoms of approaching melancholy; and at length exhibited themſelves by penitential lamentations of the SIN ſhe had committed with reſpect to the moſt trifling actions of her life, and in which no ſhadow of offence could poſſibly be found. At the time I was called in, this ſuperſtitious melancholy was attended with certain indications of mental derangement. The diſtemper clearly originated in the indiſpoſition of the body, and

the gloomy apprehenſions which diſeaſe and pain had introduced into the mind during a period of many months. This once lively, handſome, but now almoſt inſane female, was daily attacked with ſuch violent paroxyſms of her complaint, that ſhe loſt all ſenſe of her ſituation, and exclaimed, in horrid diſtraction and deep deſpair, that her perdition was already accompliſhed, and that *the fiends were waiting to receive her ſoul, and plunge it into the bittereſt torments of hell.* Her conſtitution, however, ſtill fortunately retained ſufficient ſtrength to enable me, by the power of medicine, gradually to change its temperament, and to reduce the violence of the fever which had been long preying on her life. Her mind became more calm in proportion as her nerves recovered their former tone; and when her intellectual powers were in a condition to be acted on with effect, I ſucceſsfully counteracted the baleful effects of SUPERSTITION by the wholeſome infuſion of real RELIGION, and reſtored, by degrees, a lovely, young, and virtuous woman to her family and herſelf.

Another inſtance of a ſimilar nature occurred very recently, in which the patient experienced all thoſe ſymptoms which prognoſticate the approach of religious melancholy, and the completion of whoſe ſorrow and deſpondency would

quickly have been effected, if good fortune had not deprived her of the advice of an ignorant and bigoted prieſt, to whom her friends, when I was called in, had reſolved to apply. This young lady, whoſe mind remained pure and uncorrupted amidſt all the luxuries and diſſipations which uſually accompany illuſtrious birth and elevated ſtation, poſſeſſed by nature great tranquillity of diſpoſition, and lived with quietude and content far retired from the pleaſures of the world. I had been long acquainted with her family, and entertained for them the warmeſt eſteem. The dangerous condition of her health gave me great anxiety and concern; for whenever ſhe was left one moment to herſelf, and even in company whenever ſhe cloſed her eyes, a thouſand horrid ſpectres preſented themſelves to her diſordered mind, and ſeemed ready to devour her from every corner of the apartment. I enquired whether theſe imaginary ſpectres made any impreſſion upon the affections of her heart, but ſhe anſwered in the negative; and deſcribed the horrors which ſhe felt from the ſuppoſed fierceneſs of their eyes, and the threatening geſticulations of their bodies. I endeavoured to compoſe her, by aſſuring her that they were the creatures of her own fancy; the wild chimeras of a weakened brain; that her long courſe of ill health had affected her mind; and that, when a proper courſe of medicine,

dietic regimen, and gentle exercise, had restored her strength, these dreadful appearances would give way to the most delightful visions. The course I pursued succeeded in a short time beyond my most sanguine expectations, and I raised her languid powers to health and happiness. But if she had confided the anxieties of her mind to her confessor instead of her physician, the holy father would, in all probability, have ascribed her gloomy apprehension to the machinations of the devil, and have used nothing but purely spiritual antidotes to destroy them, which would have encreased the melancholy, and possibly have thrown her into the darkest abyss of madness despair.

This grievous malady, indeed, is not the exclusive offspring of mistaken piety and religious zeal; for it frequently invades minds powerful by nature, improved by science, and assisted by rational society. Health, learning, conversation, highly advantageous as they unquestionably are to the powers both of the body and the mind, have, in particular instances, been found incapable of resisting the influence of intense speculation, an atrabilarious constitution, and a superstitious habit. I have already mentioned the thick cloud of melancholy which obscured the latter days of the great and justly-celebrated HALLER, which were

paſſed under the oppreſſion of a religious deſpondency, that robbed him not only of all enjoyment, but almoſt of life itſelf. During the long period of four years immediately antecedent to his death, he lived (if ſuch a ſtate can be called exiſtence) in continual miſery; except, indeed, at thoſe ſhort intervals when the returning powers of his mind enabled him, by the employment of his pen, to experience a temporary relief. A long courſe of ill health had forced him into an exceſſive uſe of *opium*, and, by taking gradually increaſed quantities of that inſpiſſated juice*, he kept

* OPIUM is the juice of the *papaver album*, or *white poppy*, with which the fields of *Aſia Minor* are in many places ſown, as ours are with corn. When the heads are near ripening, they wound them with an inſtrument that has five edges, which, on being ſtuck into the head, makes at once five long cuts in it; and from theſe wounds the *opium* flows, and is next day taken off by a perſon who goes round the field, and put into a veſſel which he carries faſtened to his girdle. At the ſame time that this opium is collected, the oppoſite ſide of the poppy head is wounded, and the *opium* collected from it the enſuing day. They diſtinguiſh, however, the produce of the firſt wounds from that of the ſucceeding ones; for the firſt juice afforded by the plant is greatly ſuperior to what is obtained afterwards. After they have collected the *opium*, they moiſten it with a ſmall quantity of water or honey, and work it a long time upon a flat, hard, ſmooth board, with a thick and long inſtrument of the ſame wood, till it becomes of the conſiſtence of pitch, and then work it up with their hands, and form it into cakes or rolls for ſale. It contains gum, reſin, eſſential oil, ſalt, and earthy matter; but its narcotic and ſomniferous power has been experimentally found to reſide in its eſſential oil.

kept himſelf continually fluctuating between a ſtate of mind unnaturally elevated and deeply dejected; for the firſt effects of this powerful drug are like thoſe of a ſtrong ſtimulating cordial, but they are ſoon ſucceeded by univerſal languor, or irreſiſtible propenſity to ſleep, attended with dreams of the moſt agitated and enthuſiaſtic nature.* I was myſelf an eye witneſs of the dreary melancholy into which this great and good man was plunged about two years before the kind, but cold, and though friendly yet unwelcome, hand of Death releaſed him from his pains. The ſociety which during that time he was moſt ſolicitous to obtain, was that of prieſts and eccleſiaſtics of every deſcription: he was uneaſy when they were not with him: nor was he always happy in his choice of theſe ſpiritual comforters;

* OPIUM is the moſt ſovereign remedy in the Materia Medica for eaſing pain and procuring ſleep; and alſo the moſt certain antiſpaſmodic yet known; but, like other powerful medicines, becomes highly noxious to the human conſtitution, and even mortal, when improperly adminiſtered. Its liberal and long continued uſe has been obſerved greatly to injure the brain and nerves, and to diminiſh their influence on the vital organs of the body. By its firſt effects, which are exhilirating, it excites a kind of temporary delirium, which diſſipates and exhauſts the ſpirits; and, by its ſubſequent narcotic power, occaſions confuſion of ideas and loſs of memory, attended with nauſea, giddineſs, headach, and conſtipation in the bowels. It ſuſpends or diminiſhes, in ſhort, all the natural ſecretions and excretions of the body, that of perſpiration alone excepted.

for though, at times, he was attended by ſome of the moſt enlightened and orthodox divines of the age and country in which he lived, he was at others ſurrounded by thoſe whom nothing but the reduced and abject ſtate of his faculties would have ſuffered him to endure. But during even this terrible ſubverſion of his intellectual powers, his love of glory ſtill ſurvived in its original radiance, and defied all the terrors both of heaven and earth to deſtroy or diminiſh their force. HALLER had embraced very deep and ſerious notions of the importance of Chriſtianity to the ſalvation of the ſoul, and the redemption of mankind, which, by the ardency of his temper, and the ſaturnine diſpoſition of his mind, were carried into a miſtaken zeal and apprehenſion; and, inſtead of affording the comfort and conſolation its tenets and principles are ſo eminently calculated to inſpire, aggravated his feelings, and deſtroyed his repoſe. In a letter which he wrote a few days before his death, to his great and good friend, the celebrated HEYNE of *Gottingen*, in which he announces the deep ſenſe he then entertained, from his great age and multiplied infirmities, of his impending diſſolution, he expreſſed his firm belief of REVELATION, and his faith in the mercy of GOD and the interceſſion of JESUS CHRIST; but hints his fears leſt the manifold ſins, and the various errors and tranſgreſſions

tranſgreſſions which the natural frailty of man muſt have accumulated during a courſe of ſeventy years, ſhould have rendered his ſoul too guilty to expect the promiſed mercy to repentant ſinners, and earneſtly requeſts of him to enquire of his acquaintance LESS, the virtuous divine of that place, whether he could not furniſh him with ſome pious work, that might tend to decreaſe the terrors he felt from the idea of approaching death, and relieve his tortured ſpirit from the apprehenſion of eternal puniſhment.*

* In one account of the life of HALLER, it is ſaid that, although his declining health reſtrained his exertions in the moſt active ſcenes of life, it did not put a period to his utility; for that with indefatigable induſtry he continued, while confined to his houſe, his favourite employment of writing till within a few days of his death; which happened in the 70th year of his age, on the 12th of December, 1777. His *Elementa Phiſiologiæ* and *Bibliotheca Medicina* will afford, to lateſt poſterity, undeniable proofs of his indefatigable induſtry, penetrating genius, and ſolid judgment. But he was not leſs diſtinguiſhed as a philoſopher than beloved as a man; and he was not more eminent in every department of ſcience, than for his piety to God, and benevolence to all mankind. But the approach of death is awful to the moſt virtuous minds; "for ſurely," ſays an able writer upon this ſubject, "nothing can ſo much diſturb the paſſions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the diſruption of his union with viſible nature, a ſeparation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him; a change not only of the place, but of the manner of being; an entrance into a ſtate not ſimply which he knows not, but which, perhaps, he has not faculties to know;

The ſentiments which occupied the mind of this pious philoſopher when the dreaded hour actually arrived, whether it was comforted by the bright rays of hope, or diſmayed into total eclipſe by the dark clouds of deſpair, thoſe who ſurrounded his dying couch have not communicated to the world.

know; an immediate and perceptible communication with the Supreme Being; and, what is above all diſtreſsful and alarming, the final ſentence and unalterable allotment." Dr. JOHNSON, however, experienced the great alleviations which a ſteady faith, and firm ſenſe of Chriſtianity, are capable of affording to theſe awful apprehenſions. He inſiſted that Dr. BROCKLESBY ſhould tell him plainly whether he could recover; and on being anſwered that his recovery was impoſſible, except by a miracle, he reſolved to take no more phyſic, not even opiates; for he had prayed, he ſaid, that he might render up his ſoul to GOD unclouded. He became perfectly reſigned to his approaching fate; all his fears of death were calmed and abſorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his truſt in the merits and propitiation of JESUS CHRIST. He preſſed his ſurrounding friends to ſtudy Dr. CLARK's Sermons, becauſe, though an Arian, he is fulleſt on the propitiatory ſacrifice; for he was convinced of the neceſſity of faith in the ſacrifice of JESUS, as neceſſary beyond all good works whatever for the ſalvation of mankind. Having thus in his mind the true Chriſtian ſcheme, at once rational and conſolatory, uniting juſtice and mercy in THE DIVINITY with the improvement of human nature, he received the holy ſacrament, and, after compoſing and fervently uttering a pious prayer, he expired on the 9th of December, 1784, aged ſeventy-five, with calm content and perfect reſignation, breathing, with almoſt his laſt breath, a devout hope of divine grace in favour of a young lady, a MISS MORRIS, who at that moment requeſted his bleſſing. He died in ſhort as he lived, full of reſignation, ſtrengthened in faith, and joyful in hope.

world. Death, while, it releaſed both his body and his mind from the painful infirmities and deluſions under which they had ſo long and ſo ſeverely ſuffered, left his fame, which, while living he had valued much dearer than his life, expoſed to the cruel ſhafts of ſlander and malevolence. A young nobleman of the Canton of *Berne*, either moved by his own malice, or made an inſtrument of the malice of others, aſſerted in a letter, which was for a long time publicly exhibited in the univerſity of *Gottingen*, that HALLER had in his laſt moments denied his belief of the truth of Chriſtianity. But thoſe by whom he was then ſurrounded betray, by the propagation of this falſehood, the fears they entertain of the firm ſupport which his approbation would have given to that pure and pious ſyſtem of religion, which they, it is well known, are ſo diſpoſed to deſtroy. For certain it is that HALLER never doubted of any of the attributes of the Deity, except his mercy: and this doubt was not the offspring of infidelity, but a crude abortion of that morbid melancholy which, during his latter days, ſettled ſo ſeverely on his diſtempered mind. The ſame dread which he entertained of death, has been felt with equal, if not greater, horror by minds as powerful, and leſs ſuperſtitious. He candidly confeſſed the important and abſtruſe point upon which he had not been able to ſatisfy himſelf.

His high ſenſe of virtue made even his own almoſt exemplary and unblemiſhed life appear, in his too refined ſpeculations, groſsly vicious. MERCY he knew muſt unavoidably be correlative with JUSTICE; and he unfortunately conceived that no repentance, however ſincere, could ſo purify the ſinful, and, as he imagined, deplorable corruption of his ſoul, as to render it worthy of divine grace. So utterly had the melancholy dejection of his mind deprived him of a juſt ſenſe of his own character, and a perfect knowledge of the nature of THE ALMIGHTY. The mournful propenſity of this great man muſt, if he had paſſed his days either in pious abſtinence, or irrational ſolitude, have hurried him rapidly into irrecoverable phrenzy: but HALLER enjoyed the patronage of the great, the converſation of the learned, the company of the polite; and he not only ſuſpended the effects of his malady, and of the medicines by which he attempted to relieve it, by theſe advantages, but by the ſciences, which he ſo dearly loved, and ſo ſucceſsfully cultivated. The horrible evil, however, bowed him down in ſpite of all his efforts, and particularly oppreſſed him whenever he relaxed from his literary purſuits, or conſulted his ghoſtly comforters on the loſt condition of his ſoul.

SOLITUDE, to a mind labouring under theſe erroneous notions of religion, operates like a rack,

rack, by which the imagination inflicts the ſevereſt tortures on the ſoul. A native of Geneva, a young man of very elegant manners, and a highly cultivated mind, ſome time ſince conſulted me upon the ſubject of a nervous complaint, which I immediately diſcovered to be the conſequence of a miſtaken zeal for religion; a diſpoſition naturally ſedentary, and a habit which is too frequently indulged in ſolitude by unthinking youth. Theſe circumſtances had already made the moſt dreadful inroads both on his body and his mind. His emaciated frame was daily enfeebled by his paralized intellects, and he at length fell into a ſettled melancholy, which continued four years to defy the power of medicine, and finally deſtroyed his nervous ſyſtem. A ſtrong conviction of the heinous ſin into which the blindneſs of his paſſion, and evil example, had led him, at length flaſhed ſuddenly on his mind, and he felt, with the keeneſt compunctions of a wounded conſcience, how impious he muſt appear to the all-ſeeing eye of the Great Creator. Conſternation and diſmay ſeized his guilty mind; and the ſenſe of virtue and religion, which he was naturally diſpoſed to entertain, ſerved only to encreaſe his horror and diſtraction. He would have ſought a refuge from the arrows of remorſe under the protecting ſhields of penitence and prayer, but a ſcrupulous apprehenſion interpoſed

the idea that it would be profanation in ſo guilty a ſinner to exerciſe the offices of a pure and holy religion. He at length, however, proceeded to confeſſion; but recollecting, after every diſcloſure, that he had ſtill omitted many of his tranſgreſſions, additional horrors ſeized upon his mind, and tortured his feelings on the irrecoverable condition of his guilty ſoul. At intervals, indeed, he was able to perceive that the perturbations of his mind were the produce of his diſorganized frame and diſordered ſpirit; and he endeavoured to recruit the one by air and exerciſe, and to diſſipate the other by ſcenes of feſtivity and mirth: but his diſorder had fixed its fibres too deeply in his conſtitution to be eradicated by ſuch ſlight and temporary remedies. From the inefficacious antidotes of ſocial pleaſure and worldly diſſipation, he was induced to try the calm and ſedentary effects of ſolitary ſtudy; but his faculties were incapable of taſting the refined and elegant occupation of learning and the muſe: his powers of reaſoning were deſtroyed; his ſenſibilities, excepting on the ſubject of his complaint, were dried up; and neither the ſober inveſtigations of ſcience, nor the more lively charms of poetry, were capable of affording him the leaſt conſolation. Into ſo abject a ſtate, indeed, did his intellectual faculties at length fall, that he had not during one period ſufficient ability to compute

pute the change due to him from any piece of coin in the common tranſactions of life; and he confeſſed that he had been frequently tempted, by the deepneſs of his diſtreſs, to releaſe both his body and his mind from their cruel ſufferings, and "to ſhake impatiently his great affliction off" by ſelf-deſtruction; but that the idea of heaping new puniſhments on his ſoul, by the perpetration of this additional crime, continually interpoſed, and ſaved him from the guilty deed. During this ſtate of mental derangement, he fortunately met with a liberal-minded and rational divine, who, free from the errors of prieſtcraft, and poſſeſſed of a profound knowledge of the virtues of religion and the ſtructure of the human mind, undertook the arduous, but humane and truly philoſophic, taſk of endeavouring to bring back his mind to a rational ſenſe of its guilt, and to a firm hope of pardon through the interceſſion of our Saviour. Religion, that ſweet and certain comforter of human woes, at lengh effected a partial recovery, and reſtored him to a degree of tranquillity and repoſe: but he ſtill continued to ſuffer, for years afterwards, ſo great a miſery from the ſhattered condition of his nerves, that he could not even compoſe a letter upon the moſt trifling and indifferent ſubject without the greateſt labour and pain. As his feelings had never been hurt by any ſenſe of injury received from mankind,

kind, he entertained no antipathy to his ſpecies; but as he was conſcious that his reduced ſtate of health prevented him from keeping up any rational or pleaſing intercourſe with them, he felt a ſort of abhorrence to ſociety, and refuſed, even when adviſed by his phyſicians and intimate friends, to mingle in its pleaſures, or engage in its concerns. The propoſal, indeed, appeared as extravagant and abſurd to his feelings, as if a man, almoſt choaking under the convulſion of a confirmed aſthma, had been told that it was only neceſſary for him to breathe freely, in order to acquire perfect eaſe. This deplorable ſtate of health induced him to conſult ſeveral Italian and Engliſh phyſicians; and being adviſed to try the effects of a ſea voyage, he ſet ſail for Riga, where he ſafely arrived; but, after a reſidence of ſix months, found himſelf unaltered, and preciſely in the ſame dreadful condition in which he had ſet ſail. On his return, I was called in to his aſſiſtance. There were at this period but very few of thoſe gloomy and noxious vapours of ſuperſtition, which had ſo tormented his mind, remaining; but his body, and particularly his nervous ſyſtem, was ſtill racked with agonizing pains. I had the good fortune to afford him great relief; and when, at times, his ſufferings were ſuſpended, and his ſpirits enlivened by pleaſing converſation, he was certainly one of the moſt entertaining

entertaining men, both as to the vivacity of his wit, the ſhrewdneſs of his obſervations, the powers of his reaſoning, and the ſolidity of his judgment, that I had ever known.

Theſe inſtances clearly evince how dangerous Solitude may prove to minds pre-diſpoſed, by accident or nature, to indulge a miſ-directed imagination, either upon the common ſubjects of life, or upon the more important and affecting topic of religion: but it muſt not be concluded from the obſervations I have already made, that a rational Retirement from the vices, the vanities, and the vexations of the world, is equally unfriendly, under all circumſtances, to a ſickly mind. The cool and quiet repoſe which ſeclusion affords, is frequently the moſt advantageous remedy which can be adopted for the recovery of a diſturbed imagination. It would, indeed, be the height of abſurdity to recommend to a perſon ſuffering under a derangement of the nervous ſyſtem, the diverſions and diſſipations of public life, when it is known, by ſad experience, as well as by daily obſervation, that the leaſt hurry diſorders their frame, and the gentleſt intercourſe palpitates their hearts, and ſhakes their brains, almoſt to diſtraction. The healthy and robuſt can have no idea how violently the ſlighteſt touch vibrates through the trembling nerves of the dejected

dejected valetudinarian. The gay and healthy, therefore, ſeldom ſympathize with the ſorrowful and the ſick. This, indeed, is one reaſon why thoſe who, having loſt the firm and vigorous tone of mind which is ſo eſſentially neceſſary in the intercourſes of the world, generally abandon Society, and ſeek in the ſoftneſs of Solitude a ſolace for their cares and anxieties; for there they frequently find a kind aſylum, where the ſoul reſts free from diſturbance, and in time appeaſes the violence of its emotions: for "the foſter-nurſe of nature is repoſe." Experience, alas! ſad experience, has but too well qualified me to treat of this ſubject. In the fond expectation of being able to re-eſtabiſh my nervous ſyſtem, and to regain that health which I had broken down, and almoſt deſtroyed, by intenſe application, I repaired to the Circle of *Weſtphalia*, in order to taſte the waters of *Pyrmont*, and to divert the melancholy of my mind by the company which reſort to that celebrated ſpring: but, alas! I was unable to enjoy the lively ſcene; and I walked through multitudes of the great, the elegant, and the gay, in painful ſtupor, ſcarcely recognizing the features of my friends, and fearful of being noticed by thoſe who knew me. The charms of wit, and the ſplendors of youthful beauty, were to me as unalluring as age and uglineſs when joined to the deformities of vice,

vice, and the fatiguing prate of ſenſeleſs folly. During this miſerable impotence of ſoul, and while I vainly ſought a temporary relief of my own calamity, I was hourly aſſailed by a crowd of wretched ſouls, who implored me to afford them my profeſſional aid, to alleviate thoſe pains which time, alas! had fixed in their conſtitutions, and which depended more on the management and reformation of their own minds than on the powers of medicine to cure. For

I could not miniſter to a mind diſeaſed,
Pluck from the memory a rooted ſorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And, with a ſweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanſe the ſtuffed boſom of that perilous ſtuff
Which weighed upon the heart.

To avoid theſe painful importunities, I flew from the taſteleſs ſcene with abrupt and angry violence; and, confining myſelf to the ſolitude of my apartments, paſſed the lingering day in dreary dejection, muſing on the melancholy groupe from which I had juſt eſcaped. But my home did not long afford me an aſylum. I was on the enſuing day aſſailed by a hoſt of hypochondriaſts, attended by their reſpective adviſers, who, while my own nervous malady was raging at its full height, ſtunned me with the various details of their imaginary woes, and excruciated me

me the whole day with their unfounded ails and tormenting lamentations. The friendly approach of night at length relieved me from their importunities; but my ſpirits had been ſo exhauſted, my feelings ſo vexed, my patience ſo tired, and the ſenſibilites of my mind ſo aggravated, by the perſecution I had endured, that

"Tir'd nature's ſweet reſtorer, balmy ſleep,"

fled from my eyes; and I lay reſtleſs upon my couch, alive only to my miſeries, in a ſtate of anguiſh more inſupportable than my bittereſt enemies would, I hope, have inflicted on me. About noon on the enſuing day, while I was endeavouring to procure on the ſofa a ſhort repoſe, the Princeſs ORLOW, accompanied by two other very agreeable Ruſſian ladies, whoſe company and converſation it was both my pride and my pleaſure frequently to enjoy, ſuddenly entered my apartment, to enquire after my health, of the ſtate of which they had received an account only a few hours before: but ſuch was the petulance of temper into which my diſordered mind betrayed me, that I immediately roſe, and, with incivil vehemence, requeſted they would not diſturb me. The fair intruders inſtantly left the room. About an hour afterwards, and while I was reflecting on the impropriety of my conduct,

duct, the Prince himself honoured me with a visit. He placed himself on a chair close by the couch on which I lay, and, with that kind affection which belongs to his character, enquired, with the tendereſt and moſt ſympathizing concern, into the cauſe of my diſorder. There was a charm in his kindneſs and attention that ſoftened, in ſome degree, the violence of my pains. He continued his viſit for ſome time; and when he was about to leave me, after premiſing that I knew him too well to ſuſpect that ſuperſtition had any influence in his mind, ſaid, "Let me adviſe you, whenever you find yourſelf in ſo waſpiſh and petulant a mood, as you muſt have been in when you turned the Princeſs and her companions out of the room, to endeavour to check the violence of your temper; and I think you will find it an excellent expedient for this purpoſe, if, while any friend is kindly enquiring after your health, however averſe you may be at the moment to ſuch an enquiry, inſtead of driving him ſo uncivilly away, you would employ yourſelf in a ſilent mental repetition of *The Lord's Prayer*, it might prove very ſalutary, and would certainly be much more ſatisfactory to your mind." No advice could be better imagined than this was to divert the emotions of impatience, by creating in the mind new objects of attention, and turning the raging current of diſtempered thought into a more

more pure and peaceful channel. Experience, indeed, has enabled me to announce the efficacy and virtue of this expedient. I have frequently, by the practice of it, defeated the fury of the petulant paſſions, and completely ſubdued many of thoſe acerbities which vex and teize us in the hours of grief, and during the ſorrows of ſickneſs. Others alſo, to whom I have recommended it, have experienced from it ſimilar effects. The Prince, " my guide, philoſopher, and friend," a few weeks after he had given me this wiſe and ſalutary advice, conſulted me reſpecting the difficulty he frequently laboured under in ſuppreſſing the violence of thoſe tranſports of affection which he bore towards his young and amiable conſort, and which, in a previous converſation on philoſophic ſubjects, I had ſeriouſly exhorted him to check, under a conviction, that a ſteady flame is more permanent and pure than a raging fire. He aſked me, with ſome concern, what expedient I could recommend to him as moſt likely to controul thoſe emotions which happy lovers are ſo anxious to indulge. " My dear friend," I replied, " there is no expedient can ſurpaſs your own; and whenever the intemperance of paſſion is in danger of ſubverting the dictates of reaſon, repeat *the Lord's Prayer*, and I have no doubt you will foil its fury."

When

When the mind is thus enabled to check and regulate the effects of the paſſions, and bring back the temper to its proper tone and rational bias, the ſerenity and calmneſs of SOLITUDE aſſiſts the atchievement, and completes the victory. It is then ſo far from infuſing into the mind the virulent poiſons we have before deſcribed, that it affords a ſoft and pleaſing balm to the ſoul; and, inſtead of being its greateſt enemy, becomes its higheſt bleſſing and its warmeſt friend.

Solitude, indeed, as I have already obſerved, is far from betraying well-regulated minds either into the miſeries of melancholy, or the dangers of excentriciſm. It raiſes a healthy and vigorous imagination to its nobleſt production, elevates it when dejected, calms it when diſturbed, and reſtores it, when partially diſordered, to its natural tone. It is, as in every other matter, whether phyſical or moral, the abuſe of SOLITUDE which renders it dangerous: like every powerful medicine, it is attended, when miſapplied, with the moſt miſchievous conſequences; but when properly adminiſtered, is pleaſant in its taſte, and highly ſalutary in its effects. He who knows how to enjoy it, can

——————————truly tell
To live in SOLITUDE is with TRUTH to dwell;

Where

Where gay Content with healthy Temperance meets,
And Learning intermixes all its ſweets;
Where Friendſhip, Elegance, and Arts unite
To make the hours glide ſocial, eaſy, bright:
He taſtes the converſe of the pureſt mind;
Tho' mild, yet manly; and tho' plain, refin'd;
And thro' the moral world expatiates wide,
TRUTH as his end, and VIRTUE as his guide.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

THE INFLUENCE OF SOLITUDE ON THE PASSIONS.

THE PASSIONS loſe in Solitude a certain portion of that regulating weight by which in Society they are guided and controlled: The counteracting effects produced by variety, the reſtraints impoſed by the obligations of civility, and the checks which ariſe from the calls of humanity, occur much leſs frequently in Retirement than amidſt the multifarious tranſactions of a buſy world. The deſires and ſenſibilities of the heart having no real objects on which their vibrations can pendulate, are ſtimulated and increaſed by the powers of imagination. All the propenſities of the ſoul, indeed, experience a degree of reſtleſſneſs and vehemence greater than they ever feel while diverted by the pleaſures, ſubdued by the ſurrounding diſtreſſes, and engaged by the buſineſs of active and ſocial life.

The calm which ſeems to accompany the mind in its retreat is deceitful; the paſſions are ſecretly at work within the heart; the imagination is continually heaping fuel on the latent fire, and

and at length the labouring deſire burſts forth, and glows with volcanic heat and fury. The temporary inactivity and inertneſs which Retirement ſeems to impoſe, may check, but cannot ſubdue, the energies of ſpirit. The high pride and lofty ideas of great and independent minds may be, for a while, lulled into repoſe; but the moment the feelingsof ſuch a character are awakened by indignity or outrage, its anger ſprings like an elaſtic body drawn from its centre, and pierces with vigorous ſeverity the object that provoked it. The perils of Solitude, indeed, always encreaſe in proportion as the ſenſibilities, imaginations, and paſſions of its votaries are quick, excurſive, and violent. The man may be the inmate of a cottage, but the ſame paſſions and inclinations ſtill lodge within his heart: *his* manſion may be changed, but *their* reſidence is the ſame; and though they appear to be ſilent and undiſturbed, they are ſecretly influencing all the propenſities of his heart. Whatever be the cauſe of his retirement, whether it be a ſenſe of undeſerved misfortune, the ingratitude of ſuppoſed friends, the pangs of deſpiſed love, or the diſappointments of ambition, memory prevents the wound from healing, and ſtings the ſoul with indignation and reſentment. The image of departed pleaſures haunts the mind, and robs it of its wiſhed tranquillity. The ruling paſſion ſtill ſubſiſts;

ſubſiſts; it fixes itſelf more ſtrongly on the fancy; moves with greater agitation; and becomes, in retirement, in proportion as it is inclined to VICE or VIRTUE, either a horrid and tormenting *ſpectre*, inflicting apprehenſion and diſmay, or a delightful and ſupporting *angel*, irradiating the countenance with ſmiles of joy, and filling the heart with peace and gladneſs.

Bleſt is the man, as far as earth can bleſs,
Whoſe meaſur'd PASSIONS reach no wild exceſs;
Who, urg'd by Nature's voice, her gifts enjoys,
Nor other means than Nature's force employs.
While warm with youth the ſprightly current flows,
Each vivid ſenſe with vig'rous rapture glows;
And when he droops beneath the hand of age,
No vicious habit ſtings with fruitleſs rage;
Gradual his ſtrength and gay ſenſations ceaſe,
While joys tumultuous ſink in ſilent peace.

The extraordinary power which the PASSIONS aſſume, and the improper channel in which they are apt to flow in retired ſituations, is conſpicuous from the greater acrimony with which they are in general tainted in ſmall villages than in large towns. It is true, indeed, that they do not always explode in ſuch ſituations with the open and daring violence which they exhibit in a metropolis; but lie buried, as it were, and ſmouldering in the boſom, with a more malignant

and conſuming flame. To thoſe who only obſerve the liſtleſſneſs and languor which diſtinguiſh the characters of thoſe who reſide in ſmall provincial towns, the ſlow and uniform rotation of amuſements which fills up the leiſure of their lives; the confuſed wildneſs of their cares; the poor ſubterfuges to which they are continually reſorting, in order to avoid the clouds of diſcontent that impend, in angry darkneſs, over their heads; the lagging current of their drooping ſpirits; the miſerable poverty of their intellectual powers; the eagerneſs with which they ſtrive to raiſe a card party; the tranſports they enjoy on the proſpect of any new diverſion or occaſional exhibition; the haſte with which they run towards any ſudden, unexpected noiſe, that interrupts the deep ſilence of their ſituation; and the patient induſtry with which, from day to day, they watch each others conduct, and circulate reports of every action of each others lives, will ſcarcely imagine that any virulence of paſſion can diſturb the boſoms of perſons who live in ſo quiet and ſeemingly compoſed a ſtate. But the unoccupied time and barren minds of ſuch characters cauſe the fainteſt emotions, and moſt common deſires, to act with all the violence of high and untamed paſſions. The loweſt diverſions, a cock-fighting, or a poney race, make the boſom of a country 'Squire beat with the higheſt rapture; while

while the inability to attend the monthly ball fills the minds of his wife and daughter with the keeneſt anguiſh. Circumſtances which ſcarcely make any impreſſion on thoſe who reſide in the metropolis, plunge every deſcription of reſidents in a country village into all the extravagances of joy, or the dejections of ſorrow: from the peer to the peaſant, from the ducheſs to the dairy maid, all is rapture and convulſion. Competition is carried on for the humble honours and petty intereſts of a ſequeſtered town, or miſerable hamlet, with as much heat and rancour, as it is for the higheſt dignities and greateſt emoluments of the ſtate. Upon many occaſions, indeed, ambition, envy, revenge, and all the diſorderly and malignant paſſions, are felt and exerciſed with a greater degree of violence and obſtinacy amidſt the little contentions of clay-built cottages, than ever prevailed amidſt the higheſt commotions of courts. PLUTARCH relates, that when CÆSAR, after his appointment to the government of *Spain*, came to a little town as he was paſſing the Alps, his friends, by way of mirth, took occaſion to ſay, "Can there here be any diſputes for offices, any contentions for precedency, or ſuch envy and ambition as we behold among the great in all the tranſactions of Imperial ROME?" The idea betrayed their ignorance of human nature; while the celebrated reply of their great commander, that

He would rather be the firſt man in this little town, than the ſecond even in the imperial city, ſpoke the language not of an individual, but of the ſpecies; and inſtructed them that there is no place, however inſignificant, in which the ſame paſſions do not proportionately prevail. The humble competitors for village honours, however low and ſubordinate they may be, feel as great anxiety for pre-eminence, as much jealouſy of rivals, and as violent envy againſt ſuperiors, as agitate the boſoms of the moſt ambitious ſtateſmen, in contending for the higheſt prize of glory, of riches, or of power. The manner, perhaps, in which theſe inferior candidates exert their paſſions may be leſs artful, and the objects of them leſs noble, but they are certainly not leſs virulent. "Having," ſays EUPHELIA, who had quitted *London* to enjoy the quietude and happineſs of a rural village, "been driven by the mere neceſſity of eſcaping from abſolute inactivity, to make myſelf more acquainted with the affairs and happineſs of this place, I am now no longer an abſolute ſtranger to *rural converſation* and employments; but am far from diſcerning in them more innocence or wiſdom than in the ſentiments or conduct of thoſe with whom I have paſſed more chearful and more faſhionable hours. It is common to reproach the tea-table and the park with giving opportunities and encouragement

couragement to ſcandal. I cannot wholly clear them from the charge; but muſt, however, obſerve, in favour of the modiſh prattlers, that if not by principle, we are at leaſt by accident, leſs guilty of defamation than the country ladies. For having greater numbers to obſerve and cenſure, we are commonly content to charge them only with their own faults or follies, and ſeldom give way to malevolence, but ſuch as ariſes from injury or affront, real or imaginary, offered to ourſelves. But in thoſe diſtant provinces, where the ſame families inhabit the ſame houſes from age to age, they tranſmit and recount the faults of a whole ſucceſſion. I have been informed how every eſtate in the neighbourhood was originally got, and find, if I may credit the accounts given me, that there is not a ſingle acre in the hands of the right owner. I have been told of intrigues between beaus and toaſts that have been now three centuries in their quiet graves; and am often entertained with traditional ſcandal on perſons of whoſe names there would have been no remembrance, had they not committed ſomewhat that might diſgrace their deſcendants. If once there happens a quarrel between the principal perſons of two families, the malignity is continued without end; and it is common for old maids to fall out about ſome election in which their grandfathers were competitors. Thus

malice and hatred deſcend here with an inheritance; and it is neceſſary to be well verſed in hiſtory, that the various factions of the county may be underſtood. You cannot expect to be on good terms with families who are reſolved to love nothing in common: and, in ſelecting your intimates, you are, perhaps, to conſider which party you moſt favour in the Barons' Wars."

Reſentments and enmities burn with a much more furious flame amongſt the thinly ſcattered inhabitants of a petty village, than amidſt the ever varying concourſe of a great metropolis. The objects by which the paſſions are ſet on fire are hidden from our view by the tumults which prevail in a crowded city, and the boſom willingly loſes the pains which ſuch emotions excite when the cauſes which occaſioned them are forgot: but in country villages, the thorns by which the feelings have been hurt are continually before our eyes, and preſerve, on every approach towards them, a remembrance of the injuries ſuſtained. An extremely devout and highly religious lady, who reſided in a retired hamlet in *Swiſſerland*, once told me, in a converſation on this ſubject, that ſhe had completely ſuppreſſed all indignation againſt the envy, the hatred, and the malice of her ſurrounding neighbours; for that ſhe found they were ſo deeply dyed

dyed in ſin, that a rational remonſtrance was loſt upon them; and that the only vexations ſhe felt from a ſenſe of their wretchedneſs, aroſe from the idea that her ſoul would at the laſt day be obliged to keep company with ſuch incorrigible wretches.

The inhabitants of the country, indeed, both of the lower and middling claſſes, cannot be expected to poſſeſs characters of a very reſpectable kind, when we look at the conduct of thoſe who ſet them the example. A country magiſtrate, who has certainly great opportunities of forming the manners and morals of the diſtrict over which he preſides, is in general puffed up with high and extravagant conceptions of the ſuperiority of his wiſdom, and the extent of his power; and raiſing his idea of the greatneſs of his character in an inverſe proportion to his notions of the inſignificance and littleneſs of thoſe around him, he ſits enthroned with fancied pre-eminence, the diſdainful tyrant rather than the kind protector of his neighbours. Deprived of all liberal and inſtructive ſociety, confined in their knowledge both of men and things, the ſlaves of prejudice, and the pupils of folly, with contracted hearts and degraded faculties, the inhabitants of a country village feel all the baſe and ignoble paſſions, ſordid rapacity, mean envy, and inſulting oſtentation,

more forcibly than they are felt either in the enlarged ſociety of the metropolis, or even in the confined circle of the monaſtery.

The ſocial virtues, indeed, are almoſt totally excluded from cloiſters, as well as from every other kind of ſolitary inſtitution: for when the habits, intereſts, and pleaſures of the ſpecies are pent up by any means within a narrow compaſs, mutual jealouſies and exaſperation muſt prevail. Every trifling immunity, petty privilege, and paltry diſtinction, becomes an object of the moſt violent contention; and encreaſing animoſities at length reach to ſuch a degree of virulence, that the pious flock is converted into a herd of famiſhed wolves, eager to worry and devour each other.

The laws of every convent ſtrictly enjoin the holy ſiſterhood to live in Chriſtian charity and ſincere affection with each other. I have, however, when attending theſe fair recluſes in my profeſſional character, obſerved many of them with wrinkles, that ſeemed rather the effect of angry perturbation than of peaceful age; with aſpects formed rather by envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableneſs, than by mild benevolence and ſingleneſs of heart. But I ſhould do injuſtice if I did not declare, that I have ſeen ſome few who were ſtrangers to ſuch unworthy paſſions;

paſſions; whoſe countenances were unindented by their effects; and whoſe beauty and comelineſs ſtill ſhone in their native luſtre and ſimplicity. It was, indeed, painful to reflect upon the ſufferings which theſe lovely innocents muſt endure, until the thoughts of their loſt hopes, defeated happineſs, and unmerited wrongs, ſhould have exchanged the milky kindneſs of their virtuous diſpoſitions into the gall-like bitterneſs of vexation and deſpair; until the brightneſs of their charming features ſhould be darkened by the clouds of diſcontent which their continued impriſonment would create; and until their chearful and eaſy tempers ſhould be perverted by the corroſions of thoſe vindictive paſſions which the jealous furies, with whom they were immured, and to whom they formed ſo ſtriking a contraſt, muſt in time ſo cruelly inflict. Theſe lovely mourners, on entering the walls of a convent, are obliged to ſubmit to the tyranny of an envious ſuperior, or the jealouſy of the older inmates, whoſe angry paſſions ariſe in proportion as they perceive others leſs miſerable than themſelves; and retiring, at the ſtated periods, from their joint perſecution, they find that the gloomy ſolitude to which they have flown, only tends to aggravate and widen the wound it was expected to cure. It is, indeed, almoſt impoſſible for any female, however amiable, to preſerve in the

joyleſs gloom of conventual Solitude the chearing ſympathies of nature. A retroſpect of her paſt life moſt probably exhibits to her tortured fancy, ſuperſtition ſtinging with ſcorpion-like ſeverity her pious mind; love ſacrificed on the altar of family pride; or fortune ruined by the avarice of a perfidious guardian; while the future preſents to her view the dreary proſpect of an eternal and melancholy ſeparation from all the enjoyments of ſociety, and a continual expoſure to the petulance and ill-humour of the diſſatisfied ſiſterhood. What diſpoſition, however mild and gentle by nature, can preſerve itſelf amidſt ſuch confluent dangers? How is it poſſible to prevent the moſt amiable tenderneſs of heart, the moſt lively and ſenſible mind, from becoming, under ſuch circumſtances, a prey to the bitterneſs of affliction and malevolence? Thoſe who have had an opportunity to obſerve the operation of the paſſions on the habits, humours, and diſpoſitions of recluſe females, have perceived with horror the cruel and unrelenting fury with which they goad the ſoul, and with what an imperious and irreſiſtible voice they command obedience to their inclination.

The paſſion of Love, in particular, acts with much greater force upon the mind that endeavours to eſcape from its effects by retirement, than

than it does when it is either reſiſted or indulged.

——————— Who is free from Love?
All ſpace he actuates, like almighty Jove!
He haunts us waking, haunts us in our dreams;
With vigorous flight burſts thro' the cottage windows.
If we ſeek ſhelter from his perſecution
In the remoteſt corner of a foreſt,
We there elude not his purſuit; for there
With eagle wing he overtakes his prey.

Retirement, under ſuch circumſtances, is a childiſh expedient; it is expecting to atchieve that by means of a fearful flight, which it is frequently too much for the courage and the conſtancy of heroes to ſubdue. Retirement is the very neſt and arbour of this powerful paſſion. How many abandon the gay and jovial circles of the world, renounce even the moſt calm and ſatisfactory delights of friendſhip, and quit, without a ſigh, the moſt delicious and higheſt ſeaſoned pleaſures of Society, to ſeek in Retirement the ſuperior joys of Love! a paſſion in whoſe high and tender delights the inſolence of power, the treachery of friendſhip, and the moſt vindictive malice, is immediately forgot. It is a paſſion, when pure, that can never experience the leaſt decay; no courſe of time, no change of place, no alteration of circumſtances, can eraſe or leſſen the ideas of that bliſs which it has once im-

printed on the heart. Its characters are indelible. Solitude, in its moſt charming ſtate, and ſurrounded by its ampleſt powers, affords no reſource againſt its anxieties, its jealous fears, its tender alarms, its ſoft ſorrows, or its inſpiringly tumultuous joys. The boſom that is once deeply wounded by the barbed dart of real love, ſeldom recovers its tranquillity, but enjoys, if happy, the higheſt of human delights; and, if miſerable, the deepeſt of human torments. But, although the love-ſick ſhepherd fills the lonely vallies, and the verdant groves, with the ſofteſt ſighs or ſevereſt ſorrows, and the cells of the monaſteries and convents reſound with heavy groans and deep-toned curſes againſt the malignity of this paſſion, SOLITUDE may, perhaps, for a while ſuſpend, if it cannot extinguiſh its fury. Of the truth of this obſervation the hiſtory of thoſe unfortunate but real lovers ABELARD and ELOISA furniſh a memorable inſtance.

In the twelfth century, and while *Louis the Groſs* filled the throne of France, was born in the retired village of *Palais*, in *Brittany*, the celebrated PETER ABELARD. Nature had laviſhed the higheſt perfections both on his perſon and his mind: a liberal education improved to their utmoſt poſſible extent the gifts of nature; and he became, in a few years, the moſt learned, elegant,

elegant, and polite gentleman of his age and country. Philoſophy and divinity were his favourite ſtudies; and leſt the affairs of the world ſhould prevent him from becoming a proficient in them, he ſurrendered his birth-right to his younger brethren, and travelled to *Paris*, in order to cultivate his mind under that great profeſſor WILLIAM DES CHAMPEAUX. The eminence he attained as a profeſſor, while it procured him the eſteem of the rational and diſcerning, excited the envy of his rivals. But, beſides his uncommon merit as a ſcholar, he poſſeſſed a greatneſs of ſoul which nothing could ſubdue. He looked upon riches and grandeur with contempt; and his only ambition was to render his name famous among learned men, and to acquire the reputation of the greateſt doctor of his age. But when he had attained his ſeven-and-twentieth year of age, all his philoſophy could not guard him againſt the ſhafts of Love. Not far from the place where ABELARD read his lectures lived a canon of the church of *Notre Dame*, named FULBERT, whoſe niece, the celebrated ELOISA, had been educated under his own eye with the greateſt care and attention. Her perſon was well proportioned, her features regular, her eyes ſparkling, her lips vermilion and well formed, her complexion animated, her air fine, and her aſpect ſweet and agreeable. She poſſeſſed

poſſeſſed a ſurprizing quickneſs of wit, an incredible memory, and a conſiderable ſhare of learning, joined with great humility and tenderneſs of diſpoſition: and all theſe accompliſhments were attended with ſomething ſo graceful and moving, that it was impoſſible for thoſe who ſaw her not to love her. The eye of ABELARD was charmed, and his whole ſoul intoxicated, with the paſſion of Love, the moment he beheld and converſed with this extraordinary woman; and he laid aſide all other engagements to attend to his paſſion. He was deaf to the calls both of reaſon and philoſophy, and thought of nothing but her company and converſation. An opportunity fortunate for his love, but fatal to his happineſs, ſoon occurred. FULBERT, whoſe affection for his niece was unbounded, willing to improve to the higheſt degree the excellency of thoſe talents which nature had ſo bountifully beſtowed on her, engaged ABELARD as her preceptor, and received him in that character into his houſe. A mutual paſſion ſtrongly infuſed itſelf into the hearts of both pupil and preceptor. She conſented to become his miſtreſs, but for a long time refuſed to become his wife. The ſecret of their loves could not remain long concealed from the eyes of FULBERT, and the lover was diſmiſſed from his houſe; but ELOISA flew with rapture to his arms, and was placed under the protection

tection of his ſiſter, where ſhe remained until, from the cruel vengeance which her uncle exerciſed on the unfortunate ABELARD, ſhe was induced, at his requeſt, to enter into the convent of ARGENTEUIL, and he into the monaſtery of ST. GILDAS.* In this cloiſter, the baſe of which

* The retreat of ABELARD, after ELOISA had generouſly quitted the world, and renounced all thoſe pleaſures ſhe might reaſonably have promiſed herſelf, in obedience to her huſband's requeſt, and to procure him that peace of mind which he ſaid he could not otherwiſe reaſonably hope for, was firſt to the monaſtery of *St. Dennis*; from whence, by permiſſion of the abbot, he retired to *Thebaud*, in *Champain*, where he eſtabliſhed a ſchool, and taught philoſophy with great reputation and ſucceſs. But being accuſed of hereſies in ſome of his theological writings, and driven from this retirement, he ſought a dreary ſolitude in the dioceſe of *Troies*, where the biſhop, pitying his misfortunes, gave him a piece of ground, upon which he erected a religious houſe, which he named the THE PARACLETE, or the *Comforter*. Perſecution, however, ſtill followed him into this wilderneſs; and he was treated with ſo much bitterneſs, that he reſolved to leave Chriſtendom. But the duke of Brittany, to prevent the exile of ſo learned and renowned a philoſopher, named him to the abbey of *St. Gildas*, in the dioceſe of *Vannes*, at the deſire of the monks, who had already elected him for their Superior. ELOISA, who was at this time prioreſs of the the priory of *Argenteuil*, being diſcontented at the miſconduct of her nuns, was removed by ABELARD to THE PARACLETE, at which place a nunnery was founded by Innocent the Second, in the year 1131, and of which ſhe was the firſt abbeſs. In this retreat ſhe ſurvived ABELARD twenty years. ABELARD died in the priory of *St. Marcel* upon the *Soane*, near *Chalons*, on the 21ſt of April, 1142, in the ſixty-third year of his age. His corpſe

which was waſhed by the waves of a ſea leſs turbulent than the paſſions which diſturbed his ſoul, the unfortunate ABELARD endeavoured, by the exerciſes of religion and ſtudy, to obliterate all remembrance of his love; but his virtue was too feeble for the great attempt. A courſe of many years, however, had paſſed in penitence and mortification, without any communication between them, and further time might poſſibly have calmed in a ſtill greater degree the violence of their feelings; but a letter which ABELARD wrote to his friend PHILINTUS, in order to comfort him under ſome affliction which had befallen him, in which he related his affection for ELOISA with great tenderneſs, fell into her hands, and induced her to break through the ſilence which had ſo long prevailed, by writing him a letter, the contents of which revived in his mind all the former furies of his paſſion. Time, abſence, ſolitude, and prayer, had in no degree diminiſhed the amiable tenderneſs of the ſtill lovely ELOISA, or augmented the fortitude of the unfortunate ABELARD. The compoſing influence of religion ſeems to have made an earlier impreſſion upon his feelings than it did upon thoſe of ELOISA; but he continually counteracted

corpſe was ſent to the chapel of THE PARACLETE to ELOISA to be interred, according to her former requeſt to him, and in purſuance of his own deſire.

acted its effects by comparing his former felicity with his preſent torments; and he anſwered ELOISA's letter not as a moral preceptor, or holy confeſſor, but as a ſtill fond and adoring lover; as a man whoſe wounded feelings were in ſome degree alleviated by a recollection of his former joys; and who could only conſole the ſorrows of his miſtreſs by avowing an equal tenderneſs, and confeſſing the anguiſh with which their ſeparation rent his ſoul. The walls of PARACLETE reſounded his ſighs leſs frequently, and re-echoed leſs fervently with his ſorrows, than thoſe of *St. Gildas*; for his continued ſolitude, ſo far from affording him relief, had adminiſtered an aggravating medicine to his diſeaſe; and afforded that vulture, Grief, greater leiſure to tear and prey upon his diſordered heart. "Religion," ſays he, "commands me to purſue "VIRTUE, ſince I have nothing to hope for "from LOVE; but Love ſtill aſſerts its dominion in my fancy, and entertains itſelf with "paſt pleaſures. Memory ſupplies the place of "a miſtreſs. Piety and duty are not always the "fruits of Retirement. Even in deſarts, when "the dew of heaven falls not on us, we love "what we ought no longer to love. The Paſſions, ſtirred up by Solitude, fill thoſe regions "of death and ſilence; and it is very ſeldom

"that

" that what ought to be is truly followed there,
" and that GOD only is loved and ſerved."

The letters of ELOISA were ſoft, gentle, and endearing; but they breathed the warmeſt language of tenderneſs and unconquerable paſſion. " I have your picture," ſays ſhe, " in my room. " I never paſs by it without ſtopping to look at " it; and yet when you were preſent with me " I ſcarce even caſt my eyes upon it. If a pic- " ture, which is but a mute repreſentation of " an object, can give ſuch pleaſure, what can- " not letters inſpire! Letters have ſouls; they " have in them all that force which expreſſes " the tranſports of the heart: they have all the " fire of our paſſions; they can raiſe them as " much as if the perſons themſelves were pre- " ſent: they have all the ſoftneſs and delicacy " of ſpeech, and ſometimes a boldneſs of expreſ- " ſion even beyond it. We may write to each " other; ſo innocent a pleaſure is not forbidden " us. Let us not loſe, through negligence, the " only happineſs which is left to us, and the " only one, perhaps, which the malice of our " enemies can never raviſh from us. I ſhall " read that you are my huſband, and you ſhall " ſee me addreſs you as a wife. In ſpite of all " your misfortunes, you may be what you " pleaſe in your letters. Letters were firſt in-

" vented

" vented for comforting ſuch ſolitary wretches " as myſelf.* Having loſt the pleaſure of ſee- " ing you, I ſhall compenſate this loſs by the " ſatisfaction I ſhall find in your writing: There " I ſhall read your moſt ſecret thoughts; I " ſhall carry them always about me; I ſhall " kiſs them every moment. If you can be ca- " pable of jealouſy, let it be for the fond curio- " ſity I ſhall beſtow on your letters, and envy " only the happineſs of thoſe rivals. That " writing may be no trouble to you, write al- " ways to me careleſsly, and without ſtudy: " I had rather read the dictates of the heart " than of the brain. I cannot live, if you " do not tell me you always love me. You " cannot but remember (for what do not lovers " remember?) with what pleaſure I have paſſed " whole days in hearing you diſcourſe; how, " when you was abſent, I ſhut myſelf up from " every

* The reader will recollect how elegantly and happily this thought has been expreſſed by Mr. POPE in his celebrated Epiſtle from ELOISA to ABELARD.

Heaven firſt taught letters for ſome wretch's aid,
Some baniſh'd lover, or ſome captive maid:
They live, they ſpeak, they breathe what love inſpires,
Warm from the ſoul, and faithful to its fires;
The virgin's wiſh, without her fears, impart;
Excuſe the bluſh, and pour out all the heart;
Speed the ſoft intercourſe from ſoul to ſoul,
And waft a ſigh from Indus to the pole.

"every one to write to you; how uneaſy I was "till my letter had come to your hands: what "artful management was required to engage con- "fidants. This detail, perhaps, ſurprizes you, "and you are in pain for what will follow: "But I am no longer aſhamed that my paſſion "has had no bounds for you; for I have done "more than all this: I have hated myſelf, that "I might love you. I came hither to ruin my- "ſelf in a perpetual impriſonment, that I might "make you live quiet and eaſy. Nothing but "virtue, joined to a love perfectly diſengaged "from the commerce of the ſenſes, could have "produced ſuch effects. Vice never inſpires "any thing like this. How did I deceive my- "ſelf with the hopes that you would be wholly "mine when I took the veil, and engaged my- "ſelf to live for ever under your laws! For in "being profeſſed, I vowed no more than to be "yours only; and I obliged myſelf voluntarily "to a confinement in which you denied to place "me. Death only then can make me leave the "place where you have fixed me; and then too "my aſhes ſhall reſt here, and wait for yours, "in order to ſhew my obedience and devotedneſs "to you to the lateſt moment poſſible."

ABELARD, while he ſtrove, in his reply, to adhere to the dictates of reaſon, betrayed the lurking

lurking tenderneſs of his heart. " Deliver your-
" ſelf, ELOISA," ſays he, " from the ſhameful
" remains of a paſſion which has taken too deep
" root. Remember that the leaſt thought for
" any other than GOD is an adultery. If you
" could ſee me here, pale, meagre, melancholy,
" ſurrounded by a band of perſecuting monks,
" who feel my reputation for learning as a
" reproach of their ſtupidity and ignorance, my
" emaciated figure as a ſlander on their groſs and
" and ſenſual corpulency, and my prayers as an
" example for their reformation, what would
" you ſay to the unmanly ſighs, and unavailing
" tears, by which they are deceived! Alas! I
" am bowed down by the oppreſſive weight
" of Love rather than by the contrition for paſt
" offences. Oh! my ELOISA, pity me, and
" endeavour to free my labouring ſoul from its
" captivity. If your vocation be, as you ſay,
" my wiſh, deprive me not of the merit of it
" by your continual inquietudes: tell me that
" you will honour the habit which covers you
" by an inward retirement. Fear God, that
" you may be delivered from your frailties.
" Love him, if you would advance in virtue.
" Be not uneaſy in the cloiſter, for it is the
" dwelling of ſaints; embrace your bands, they
" are the chains of JESUS; and he will lighten
" them, and bear them with you, if you bear

" them

" them with humility and repentance. Con-
" ſider me no more, I entreat you, as a founder,
" or as a perſon in any way deſerving of eſteem;
" for your encomiums do but ill agree with the
" multiplying weakneſſes of my heart. I am
" a miſerable ſinner, proſtrate before my Judge;
" and when the rays of grace break on my trou-
" bled ſoul, I preſs the earth with my lips, and
" mingle my ſighs and tears in the duſt. Couldſt
" thou ſurvey thy wretched lover thus loſt and
" forlorn, thou wouldſt no longer ſolicit his af-
" fection. The tenderneſs of thy heart would
" not permit thee to interpoſe an earthly paſſion,
" which can only tend to deprive him of all
" hopes of heavenly grace and future comfort.
" Thou wouldſt not wiſh to be the object of
" ſighs and tears, which ought to be directed
" to God alone. Canſt thou, my ELOISA, be-
" come the confederate of my evil genius, and
" be the inſtrument to promote Sin's yet un-
" finiſhed conqueſt? What, alas! couldſt thou
" not atchieve with a heart the weakneſſes of
" which you ſo well know? But, oh! let me
" conjure you, by all the ſacred ties, to forget
" for ever the wretched ABELARD, and thereby
" contribute to his ſalvation. Let me entreat
" you, by our former joys, and by our now
" common misfortunes, not to abet my deſtruc-
" tion. The higheſt affection you can now
" ſhew

" ſhew me, is to hide your tenderneſs from my " view, and to renounce me for ever. Oh! " ELOISA, be devoted to GOD alone; for I here " releaſe you from all engagements to me."

The conflict between LOVE and RELIGION tore the ſoul of ELOISA with pangs far more violent and deſtructive. There is ſcarcely a line of her reply to ABELARD, that does not ſhew the dangerous influence which Solitude had given to the concealed but unſmothered paſſion that glowed within her breaſt. " Veiled as I " am," ſhe exclaims, " behold in what a diſ- " order you have plunged me! How difficult is " it to fight always for duty againſt inclination! " I know the obligation which this ſacred veil " has impoſed on me; but I feel more ſtrongly " the power which a long and habitual paſſion " has gained over my heart. I am the victim of " almighty Love: my paſſion troubles my " mind, and diſorders my ſenſes. My ſoul is " ſometimes influenced by the ſentiments of " piety which my reflections inſpire, but the " next moment I yield myſelf up to the tender- " neſs of my feelings, and to the ſuggeſtions of " my affection. My imagination riots with " wild excurſion in the ſcenes of paſt delights. I " diſcloſe to you one moment what I would not " have told you a moment before. I reſolve no

" longer

" longer to love you; I conſider the ſolemnity
" of the vow I have made, and the awfulneſs of
" the veil I have taken; but there ariſes un-
" expectedly from the bottom of my heart a
" paſſion which triumphs over all theſe notions,
" and while it darkens my reaſon, deſtroys my
" devotion. You reign in all the cloſe and in-
" ward retreats of my ſoul; and I know not
" how nor where to attack you with any proſpect
" of ſucceſs. When I endeavour to break the
" chains which bind me ſo cloſely to you, I
" only deceive myſelf, and all my efforts ſerve
" only to confirm my captivity, and to rivet
" our hearts more firmly to each other. Oh!
" for Pity's ſake comply with my requeſt; and
" endeavour, by this means, to make me re-
" nounce my deſires, by ſhewing me the obliga-
" tion I am under to renounce you. If you
" are ſtill a lover, or a father, oh! help a miſ-
" treſs, and give comfort to the diſtraction of
" an afflicted child. Surely theſe dear and
" tender names will excite the emotion either
" of pity or of love. Gratify my requeſt;
" only continue to write to me; and I ſhall
" continue to perform the hard duties of my
" ſtation without prophaning that character
" which my love for you induced me to aſſume.
" Under your advice and admonition I ſhall wil-
" lingly humble myſelf, and ſubmit with peni-

" tence and reſignation to the wonderful pro-
" vidence of GOD, who does all things for our
" ſanctification; who, by his grace, purifies all
" that is vicious and corrupt in our natures;
" and, by the inconceivable riches of his mercy,
" draws us to himſelf againſt our wiſhes, and
" by degrees opens our eyes to diſcern the great-
" neſs of that bounty which at firſt we are inca-
" pable of underſtanding. Virtue is too amiable
" not to be embraced when you reveal her
" charms, and Vice too hideous not to be avoid-
" ed when you ſhew her deformities. When
" you are pleaſed, every thing ſeems lovely to
" me. Nothing is frightful or difficult when
" you are by. I am only weak when I am
" alone, and unſupported by you; and therefore
" it depends on you alone that I may be ſuch as
" you deſire. Oh! that you had not ſo power-
" ful an influence over all my ſoul! It is your
" fears ſurely that make you thus deaf to my
" entreaties, and negligent of my deſires: but
" what is there for you to fear?* When we
" lived happily together, you might have doubt-
" ed whether it was pleaſure or affection that
" united me to you; but the place from which I

* Come, ABELARD, for what haſt thou to dread?
The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.
Nature ſtands check'd; Religion diſapproves;
E'en thou art cold—yet ELOISA loves.

" now indite my lamentations muſt have re-
" moved that idea, if it ever could find a place
" in your mind. Even within theſe gloomy
" walls, my heart ſprings towards you with
" more affection than it felt, if poſſible, in the
" gay and glittering world. Had Pleaſure been
" my guide, the world would have been the
" theatre of my joys. Two-and-twenty years
" only of my life had worn away, when the
" lover on whom my ſoul doated was cruelly
" torn from my arms; and at that age female
" charms are not generally deſpiſed; but, in-
" ſtead of ſeeking to indulge the pleaſures of
" youth, your ELOISA, when deprived of thee,
" renounced the world, ſuppreſſed the emotions
" of ſenſe at a time when the pulſes beat
" with the warmeſt ardour, and buried herſelf
" within the cold and cheerleſs region of the
" cloiſter. To you ſhe conſecrated the flower
" of her charms; to you ſhe now devotes the
" poor remains of faded beauty; and dedicates
" to heaven and to you, her tedious days and
" widowed nights in ſolitude and ſorrow."

The paſſion, alas! which ELOISA thus fondly nouriſhed in her boſom, like an adder to goad and ſting her peace of mind, was very little of a ſpiritual nature; and the walls of PARACLETE only re-echoed more fervent ſighs than ſhe had before

before breathed, and witneſſed a more abundant flow of tears than ſhe had ſhed, in the cells of ARGENTEUIL, over the memory of departed joys with her beloved ABELARD. Her letters, indeed, ſhew with what toilſome but ineffectual anxiety ſhe endeavoured to chaſten her mind, and ſupport her fainting virtue, as well by her own reaſoning and reflection, as by his counſels and exhortations; but the paſſion had tenaciouſly rooted itſelf at the very bottom of her heart; and it was not until the cloſe of life that ſhe was able to repreſs the tranſports of her imagination, and ſubdue the wild ſallies of her fond and fertile fancy. Perſonally ſeparated from each other, ſhe indulged a notion that her love could not be otherwiſe than pure and ſpiritual; but there are many parts of her letters which ſhew how much ſhe was deceived by this idea;* for, in all the

* Theſe parts of her letters, which cannot well be tranſlated into proſe, without uſing expreſſions and ideas that might offend the feelings of delicacy, have been thus elegantly rendered in poetry by Mr. POPE.

" Ah! hopeleſs, laſting flames! like thoſe that burn
To light the dead, and warm the unfruitful urn.
What ſcenes appear where'er I turn my view!
The dear ideas, when I fly, purſue;
Riſe in the grove, before the altar riſe;
Stain all my ſoul, and wanton in my eyes.
I waſte the matin lamp in ſighs for thee;
Thy image ſteals between my *God* and me:

Thy

fancied chaſtity of their tender and too ardent loves,

" Back thro' the pleaſing maze of SENSE ſhe ran,
" And felt within the ſlave of LOVE and MAN."

The wild and extravagant exceſs to which the fancy and the feelings of ELOISA were carried, was not occaſioned merely by the warm impulſes of unchecked nature; but were forced, to the injury of Virtue, and the deſtruction of Reaſon, by the rank hot-bed of MONASTIC SOLITUDE. The ſtory of theſe celebrated lovers, when

Thy voice I ſeem in every hymn to hear;
With every bead I drop too ſoft a tear.
When from the cenſer clouds of fragrance roll,
And ſwelling organs lift the riſing ſoul,
One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight;
Prieſts, tapers, temples, ſwim before my ſight:
In ſeas of flame my plunging ſoul is drown'd,
While altars blaze, and angels tremble round;
While proſtrate here in humble grief I lie,
Kind virtuous drops juſt gathering in my eye;
While praying, trembling in the duſt I roll,
And dawning grace is opening on my ſoul:
Come, if thou dar'ſt, all charming as thou art,
Oppoſe thyſelf to heaven; diſpute my heart:
Come, with one glance of thoſe deluding eyes,
Blot out each bright idea of the ſkies:
Take back that grace, thoſe ſorrows, and thoſe tears;
Take back my fruitleſs penitence and prayers;
Snatch me juſt mounting to the bleſs'd abode;
Aſſiſt the fiends, and tear me from my God.

when calmly examined, and properly underſtood, proves how dangerous it is to recede entirely from the pleaſures and occupations of ſocial life, and how deeply the imagination may be corrupted, and the paſſions inflamed, during a ſplenetic and ill-prepared Retirement from the world. The frenzies which follow diſappointed love, are of all others the moſt likely to ſettle into habits of the deepeſt melancholy. The fineſt ſenſibilities of the heart, the pureſt tenderneſs of the ſoul, when joined with a warm conſtitution, and an ardent imagination, experience from interruption and controul the higheſt poſſible ſtate of exaſperation. Solitude confirms the feelings ſuch a ſituation creates: and the paſſions and inclinations of a perſon, labouring under ſuch impreſſions, are more likely to be corrupted and inflamed by the leiſure of retirement, than they would be even by engaging in all the lazy opulence and wanton plenty of a debauched metropolis.*

* "MAN," ſays my LORD SHAFTSBURY, "is, of all other creatures, the leaſt able to bear SOLITUDE. Nor is any thing more apparent, than that there is naturally in every man ſuch a degree of ſocial affection, as inclines him to ſeek the familiarity and friendſhip of his fellows. It is here that he lets looſe a paſſion, and gives reins to a deſire which can hardly, by any ſtruggle, or inward violence, be withheld: or if it be, it ſure to create a ſadneſs, dejection, and melancholy in the mind:

The affection which PETRARCH entertained for LAURA was refined, elevated, and virtuous, and differed in almoſt every ingredient of it from the luxurious fondneſs of the unfortunate ELOISA; but circumſtances ſeparated him from the beloved object; and he laboured, during many years of his life, under the oppreſſion of that grievous melancholy which diſappointment uniformly inflicts. He firſt beheld her as ſhe was going to the church of the monaſtery of *St. Claire*. She was dreſſed in green, and her gown was embroidered with violets. Her face, her air, her gait, were ſomething more than mortal. Her perſon was delicate, her eyes tender and ſparkling, and her eye-brows black as ebony. Golden locks waved over her ſhoulders whiter than ſnow, and the ringlets were woven by the fingers of Love. Her neck was well formed, and her complexion animated by the tints of Nature, which Art vainly attempts to imitate.

mind: for whoever is unſociable, and voluntarily ſhuns ſociety, or commerce with the world, muſt of neceſſity be moroſe and ill-natured. He, on the other ſide, who is withheld by force or accident, finds in his temper the ill effects of this reſtraint. The inclination, when ſuppreſſed, breeds diſcontent; and, on the contrary, affords a healing and enlivening joy, when acting at its full liberty, and with full ſcope; as we may ſee particularly, when, after a long time of SOLITUDE and long abſence, the heart is opened, the mind diſburthened, and the ſecrets of the ſoul unfolded to a boſom friend."

imitate. When ſhe opened her mouth, you perceived the beauty of pearls, and the ſweetneſs of roſes. She was full of graces. Nothing was ſo ſoft as her looks; ſo modeſt as her carriage; ſo touching as the ſound of her voice. An air of gaiety and tenderneſs breathed around her; but ſo pure and happily tempered, as to inſpire every beholder with the ſentiments of virtue; for ſhe was chaſte as the ſpangled dew-drop on the thorn. Such was the deſcription given of this divine creature by her enſlaved lover. But, unfortunately for his happineſs, ſhe was at this time married to *Hugues de Sade*, whoſe family was originally of *Avignon*, and held the firſt offices there. Notwithſtanding the ſufferings he underwent from the natural agitation of an affection ſo tender as that which now engroſſed his ſoul, he owns that LAURA behaved to him with kindneſs ſo long as he concealed his paſſion; but when ſhe diſcovered that he was captivated with her charms, ſhe treated him with great ſeverity; avoiding every place it was likely he would frequent, and concealing her face under a large veil whenever they accidentally met. The whole ſoul of PETRARCH was overthrown by this diſaſtrous paſſion; and he felt all the viſitation of unfortunate love as grievouſly as if it had been founded upon leſs virtuous principles. He endeavoured to calm and tranquillize the

troubles of his breaſt by retiring to the celebrated ſolitude of *Vaucluſe*, a place in which nature delighted, to appear under a form the moſt ſingular and romantic: "But, alas!" ſays he, "I knew "not what I was doing. The reſource was ill "ſuited to the ſafety I ſought. Solitude was "incapable of mitigating the ſeverity of my "ſorrows. The griefs that hung around my "heart, conſumed me like a devouring flame. "I had no means of flying from their attacks. "I was alone, without conſolation, and in the "deepeſt diſtreſs, without even the counſel of a "friend to aſſiſt me. Melancholy and Deſpair "ſhot their poiſoned arrows againſt my defence-"leſs breaſt, and I filled the unſoothing and ro-"mantic vale with my ſighs and lamentations. "The Muſe, indeed, conveyed my ſufferings "to the world; but while the Poet was praiſed, "the unhappy Lover remained unpitied and for-"lorn."

The love which inſpired the lays of PETRARCH was a pure and perfect paſſion of the heart; and his ſufferings were rendered peculiarly poignant by a melancholy ſenſe of the impoſſibility of ever being united with the object of it: But the love of ABELARD and ELOISA was a furious heat of wild deſire. This paſſion flows clear or muddied, peaceful or violent, in proportion to the ſources from which

which it ſprings. When it ariſes from pure and unpolluted ſources, its ſtream is clear, peaceful, and ſurrounded with delights; but when its ſource is foul, and its courſe improperly directed, it foams and rages, overſwells its banks, and deſtroys the ſcenes which nature intended it to fertilize and adorn. The different effects produced by the different kinds of this powerful paſſion, have, on obſerving how differently the character of the ſame perſon appears when influenced by the one or the other of them, given riſe to an idea that the human ſpecies are poſſeſſed of two ſouls; the one leading to VICE, and the other conducting to VIRTUE. A celebrated philoſopher has illuſtrated this notion by the following ſtory.

A virtuous young prince, of an heroic ſoul, capable of love and friendſhip, made war upon a tyrant, who was in every reſpect his reverſe. It was the happineſs of our prince to be as great a conqueror by his clemency and bounty, as by his arms and military virtue. Already he had won over to his party ſeveral potentates and princes, who before had been ſubject to the tyrant. Among thoſe who ſtill adhered to the enemy, there was a prince who, having all the advantages of perſon and merit, had lately been made happy in the poſſeſſion and mutual love of

the moſt beautiful princeſs in the world. It happened that the occaſion of the war called the new-married prince to a diſtance from his beloved princeſs. He left her ſecure, as he thought, in a ſtrong caſtle, far within the country; but, in his abſence, the place was taken by ſurprize, and the princeſs brought a captive to the quarters of the heroic prince. There was in the camp a young nobleman, the favourite of the prince; one who had been educated with him, and was ſtill treated by him with perfect familiarity. Him he immediately ſent for, and, with ſtrict injunctions, committed the captive princeſs to his charge; reſolving ſhe ſhould be treated with that reſpect which was due to her rank and merit. It was the ſame young lord who had diſcovered her diſguiſed among the priſoners, and learnt her ſtory; the particulars of which he now related to the prince. He ſpoke in extacy on this occaſion; telling the prince how beautiful ſhe appeared even in the midſt of ſorrow; and though diſguiſed under the meaneſt habit, yet how diſtinguiſhed by her air and manner from every other beauty of her ſex. But what appeared ſtrange to our young nobleman was, that the prince, during this whole relation, diſcovered not the leaſt intention of ſeeing the lady, or ſatisfying that curioſity which ſeemed ſo natural on ſuch an occaſion. He preſſed him, but without

out ſucceſs. "Not ſee her, Sir!" ſaid he, wondering, "when ſhe is ſo much handſomer than any woman you have yet ſeen!" "For that very reaſon," replied the prince, "I would rather decline the interview; for ſhould I, upon this bare report of her beauty, be ſo charmed as to make the firſt viſit at this urgent time of buſineſs, I may, upon ſight, with better reaſon, be induced, perhaps, to viſit her when I am more at leiſure; and ſo again and again, until at laſt I may have no leiſure left for my affairs." "Would you, Sir, perſuade me then," ſaid the young nobleman, ſmiling, "that a fair face can have ſuch power as to force the will itſelf, and conſtrain a man in any reſpect to act contrary to what he thinks becoming him? Are we to hearken to the poets, in what they tell us of that incendiary LOVE and his irreſiſtible flames? A real flame we ſee burns all alike; but that imaginary one of beauty hurts only thoſe that are conſenting. It affects no otherwiſe than as we ourſelves are pleaſed to allow it. In many caſes we abſolutely command it, as when relation and conſanguinity are in the neareſt degree. Authority and law we ſee can maſter it; but it would be vain, as well as unjuſt, for any law to intermeddle or preſcribe, was not the caſe voluntary, and our will entirely free." "How comes it then," replied the prince, "that, if we are

thus maſters of our choice, and free at firſt to admire and love where we approve, we cannot afterwards as well ceaſe to love whenever we ſee cauſe? This latter liberty you will hardly defend; for I doubt not you have heard of many who, though they were uſed to ſet the higheſt value on liberty before they loved, yet, afterwards, were neceſſitated to ſerve in the moſt abject manner, finding themſelves conſtrained, and bound by a ſtronger chain than any of iron or of adamant." "Such wretches," replied the youth, "I have often heard complain, who, if you will believe them, are wretched indeed, without means or power to help themſelves. You may hear them in the ſame manner complain grievouſly of life itſelf; but, though there are doors enough at which to go out of life, they find it convenient to keep ſtill where they are. They are the very ſame pretenders who, through this plea of irreſiſtible neceſſity, make bold with what is another's, and attempt unlawful beds: but the law, I perceive, makes bold with them in its turn, as with other invaders of property. Neither is it your cuſtom, Sir, to pardon ſuch offences. So that beauty itſelf, you muſt allow, is innocent and harmleſs, and cannot compel any one to do amiſs. The debauched compel themſelves, and unjuſtly charge their guilt on Love. They who are honeſt and juſt can admire and love whatever is beautiful, without offering at any

any thing beyond what is allowed. How then is it poſſible, Sir, that one of your virtue ſhould be in pain on any ſuch account, or fear ſuch a temptation? You ſee, Sir, I am ſound and whole after having beheld the princeſs. I have converſed with her; I have admired her in the higheſt degree; yet I am myſelf ſtill, and in my duty, and ſhall be ever in the ſame manner at your command." "It is well," replied the Prince; "keep yourſelf ſo: be ever the ſame man; and look to your fair charge carefully, as becomes you; for it may ſo happen, in the preſent ſituation of the war, that this beautiful captive may ſtand us in good ſtead." The young nobleman then departed to execute his commiſſion; and immediately took ſuch care of the captive princeſs, that ſhe ſeemed as perfectly obeyed, and had every thing which belonged to her in as great ſplendor, as in her own principality, and in the height of her fortune. He found her in every reſpect deſerving, and ſaw in her a generoſity of ſoul exceeding even her other charms. His ſtudies to oblige her, and to ſoften her diſtreſs, made her, in return, deſirous to expreſs her gratitude. He ſoon diſcovered the feelings of her mind; for ſhe ſhewed, on every occaſion, a real concern for his intereſt; and when he happened to fall ill, ſhe took ſuch tender care of him herſelf, and by her ſervants, that he

ſeemed

ſeemed to owe his recovery entirely to her friendſhip. From theſe beginnings inſenſibly, and by natural degrees, as may eaſily be conceived, the youth fell deſperately in love. At firſt he offered not to make the leaſt mention of his paſſion to the princeſs, for he ſcarce dared to believe it himſelf. But time and the encreaſing ardour of his paſſion ſubdued his fears, and ſhe received his declaration with an unaffected trouble, and real concern. She reaſoned with him as a friend, and endeavoured to perſuade him to ſubdue ſo improper and extravagant a flame. But in a ſhort time he became outrageous, and talked to her of *force*. The princeſs was alarmed by his audacity, and immediately ſent to the prince to implore his protection. The prince received the information with the appearance of more than ordinary attention; ſent inſtantly for one of his firſt miniſters, and directed him to return with the princeſs's domeſtic, and tell the young nobleman that *force* was not to be uſed to ſuch a lady; but that he might uſe *perſuaſion*, if he thought it was proper ſo to do. The miniſter, who was of courſe the inveterate enemy of his prince's favourite, aggravated the meſſage, inveighed publicly againſt the young nobleman for the groſſneſs of his miſconduct, and even reproached him to his face with having been a traitor to the confidence of his prince, and a diſgrace to his nation. The miniſter,

niſter, in ſhort, conveyed the meſſage of his maſter in ſuch virulent and angry terms, that the youth looked on his caſe as deſperate; fell into the deepeſt melancholy; and prepared himſelf for that fate which he was conſcious he well deſerved. While he was thus impreſſed with a ſenſe of his miſconduct, and the danger to which it had expoſed him, the prince commanded him to attend a private audience. The youth entered the cloſet of the Prince covered with the deepeſt confuſion. "I find," ſaid he, "that I am now become dreadful to you indeed, ſince you can neither ſee me without ſhame, nor imagine me to be without reſentment. But away with all theſe thoughts from this time forwards. I know how much you have ſuffered on this occaſion. I know the power of LOVE; and am no otherways ſafe myſelf, than by keeping out of the way of Beauty. I alone am to blame; for it was I who unhappily matched you with that unequal adverſary; who gave you that impracticable taſk; who impoſed on you that hard adventure, which no one yet was ever ſtrong enough to accompliſh." "In this, Sir, as in all elſe," replied the youth, "you expreſs that goodneſs which is ſo natural to you. You have compaſſion, and can allow for human frailties; but the reſt of mankind will never ceaſe to upbraid me; nor ſhall I ever be forgiven, even were

were I able ever to forgive myſelf. I am reproached by my neareſt friends; and I muſt be odious to all mankind wherever I am known. The leaſt puniſhment I can think due to me is baniſhment for ever from your preſence; for I am no longer worthy of being called your friend." "You muſt not think of baniſhing yourſelf for ever," replied the prince: "but truſt me, if you will retire only for a while, I ſhall ſo order matters, that you ſhall return with the applauſe even of thoſe who are now your enemies, when they find what a conſiderable ſervice you ſhall have rendered both to them and me." Such a hint was ſufficient to revive the ſpirits of the deſpairing youth. He was tranſported to think that his misfortunes could be turned in any way to the advantage of his prince. He entered with joy into the ſcheme his royal friend had contrived for the purpoſe of reſtoring him to his former fame and happineſs, and appeared eager to depart, and execute the directions that were given to him. "Can you then," ſaid the prince, "reſolve to quit the charming princeſs?" "O, Sir," replied the youth, with tears in his eyes, "I am now well ſatisfied that I have in reality within me two diſtinct ſeparate ſouls. This leſſon of philoſophy I have learnt from that villainous ſophiſter Love; for it is impoſſible to believe that, having one and the ſame

ſoul,

ſoul, it ſhould be actually both GOOD and BAD, paſſionate for VIRTUE and VICE, deſirous of contraries. No; there muſt of neceſſity be two; and when the Good Soul prevails, we are happy; but when the Bad prevails, then we are miſerable. Such was my caſe. Lately the Ill Soul was wholly maſter, and I was miſerable; but now the Good prevails, by your aſſiſtance, and I am plainly a new creature, with quite another apprehenſion, another reaſon, and another will."

He who would be maſter of his appetites, muſt not only avoid temptation, but vigilantly reſtrain the earlieſt ſhoots of fancy, and deſtroy the firſt blooms of a warm imagination. It is the very nature of confidence to be always in danger. To permit the mind to riot in ſcenes of fancied delights, under an idea that reaſon will be able to extinguiſh the flames of deſire, is to nurſe and foſter the ſenſual appetites, which, when guided by the cool and temperate voice of Nature alone, are ſeldom raiſed to an improper height. The natural current of the blood, even in the warmeſt conſtitutions, and under the moſt torrid zone, would keep an even temperate courſe, were it not accelerated by ſuch incentives. Youth, indeed, deſpiſes this ſpecies of reaſoning, and imputes it to the ſickneſs of ſatiety, or the coldneſs

coldneſs of old age. I have, however, in general, obſerved, that thoſe who ſeek theſe incitements to what they improperly call LOVE, poſſeſs a rayleſs eye, a hollow cheek, a palſied hand, a pallid countenance; and theſe ſymptoms of faded ſplendor, and withered ſtrength, unqueſtionably prove that they have not conſulted NATURE in their gay purſuits; for Nature has not planted any propenſities in the human frame, which lead it to early ruin, or premature decay. The blame which is ſo unjuſtly thrown upon temperament and conſtitution, belongs to the indulgence of falſe and clamorous paſſions, thoſe which ſenſual fancies, and laſcivious ideas, have raiſed to the deſtruction of chaſtity and health.

MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS produce in this reſpect incalculable miſchiefs. The ſexes, whom theſe religious priſons ſeclude from the free and unconfined intercourſes of Society, ſuffer their imaginations to riot without reſtraint or diſcipline, in proportion to the violence impoſed on their actions. A thouſand boyiſh fancies, eager appetites, and warm deſires, are perpetually playing truant, and the chaſtity of the ſoul is corrupted. To effect the conqueſt of the paſſion of LOVE, it is abſolutely neceſſary that the evil ſuggeſtions of the imagination ſhould be firſt ſilenced; and he who ſucceeds in quelling the inſur-

rections

rections of that turbulent inmate, or in quieting its commotions, atchieves an enterprize at once difficult and glorious. The holy JEROME checked the progreſs of many diſorderly paſſions which he found riſing in his breaſt; but the paſſion of Love reſiſted all his oppoſition, and followed him, with encreaſing fury, even into the frightful cavern to which he retired to implore, in humble prayer and ſolitary abſtraction, the mercies of his God. The Solitude, however remote, to which the demon of ſenſuality is admitted, is ſoon crowded with legions of tormenting fiends. JOHN, the anchorite of the deſerts of *Thebais*, wiſely addreſſes his ſolitary brethren, "If there be any among you who in his pride "conceives that he has entirely renounced the "devil and his works, he ſhould learn that "it is not ſufficient to have done this merely by "his lips, by having reſigned his worldly dig-"nities, and by dividing his poſſeſſions among "the poor; for unleſs he has alſo abandon-"ed his ſenſual appetites, his ſalvation can-"not be ſecure. It is only by purifying our "boſoms from the pernicious influence of this "maſter paſſion, that we can ever hope to coun-"teract the machinations of Satan, and to guard "our hearts from his dangerous practices. Sin "always introduces itſelf under the guidance of "ſome guilty paſſion; ſome fond deſire; ſome

"pleaſing

" pleaſing inclination, which we willingly in-
" dulge, and by that means ſuffer the enemy
" of peace to eſtabliſh his unruly dominion in
" our ſouls. Then tranquillity and real happi-
" neſs quit their abode in our hearts, and all is
" uproar and anarchy within. This muſt be the
" fate of all who permit an evil ſpirit to ſeat it-
" ſelf on the throne of their hearts, and to ſcat-
" ter around the poiſonous ſeeds of wild deſire and
" vicious inclinations." But LOVE once indulg-ed in bright and rapturous fancies, fills the mind with ſuch high and tranſporting ideas of ſupreme bliſs, that the powers of reaſon are ſeldom if ever capable of making head againſt its faſcinations. The hermit and the monk, who, from the nature of their ſituations, cannot taſte its real charms, ought, if it were for that reaſon alone, to ſtifle at their birth the earlieſt emotions of this in-ſpiring paſſion; for the indulgence of it muſt prove fatal to the virtue, and of courſe deſtructive to the peace of every recluſe. The impoſſibility that ſuch characters can liſten with any propriety to the dictates of this delightful paſſion, ſhews in the ſtrongeſt manner the impolicy and abſur-dity of thoſe inſtitutions to the members of which celibacy is enjoined. The happineſs of every individual, as well as the civil and religious inte-reſts of ſociety, are beſt promoted by inducing the endearments of ſenſe to improve the ſympa-

thies,

thies, tenderneſs, and affections of the human heart. But theſe bleſſings are denied to the ſolitary fanatic, who is condemned to endure the ſuppreſſion of his paſſions, and prevented from indulging, without endangering his principles, both the deſires of ſenſe, and the dreams of fancy. He cannot form that delightful union of the ſexes, where ſentiments of admiration are encreaſed by proſpects of perſonal advantage; where private enjoyment ariſes from a ſenſe of mutual merit; and the warmeſt beams of love are tempered by the refreſhing gales of friendſhip. The groſſer parts of this innate and glowing paſſion can alone occupy his fancy; and the ſentiments it inſtills, inſtead of refining his deſires, and ameliorating his affections, tend, through the operation of his foul and corrupted imagination, to render his appetites ſtill more depraved. He is as ignorant of its benefits, as he is of its chaſte and dignified pleaſures; and totally unacquainted with its fine ſenſibilities, and varied emotions, his boſom burns with the moſt violent rage; his mind wallows in images of ſenſuality; and his temper frets itſelf, by unjuſtly accuſing the tempter as the author of his miſery. If the luxurious cogitations of ſuch a character were diſſipated by the pleaſures and purſuits of buſy life; if the violence of his paſſions were checked by laborious exerciſes; and if habits of rational ſtudy enabled him

him to vary the uniformity of retirement, and to ſubſtitute the excurſions of mental curioſity, and moral reflections, inſtead of that perpetual recurrence of animal deſire by which he is infected, the danger we have deſcribed would certainly be reduced; but without ſuch aids, his ſelf-denials, his penitence, his prayers, and all the auſtere diſcipline of the monkiſh and aſcetic ſchool will be ineffectual. Celibacy, indeed, inſtead of aſſiſting, as their diſciples miſtakingly conceive, to clear the ſoul from its earthly impurities, and to raiſe it to divine brightneſs and ſublimity, drags it down to the baſeſt appetites and loweſt deſires. But matrimony, or that ſuitable and appropriate union of the ſexes which prevails under different circumſtances, according to the manner and cuſtom of different ſocieties, leads, when properly formed, to the higheſt goal of human bliſs.

Hail! wedded Love, myſterious law, true ſource
Of human offspring, ſole propriety
In Paradiſe of all things common elſe:
By thee adult'rous luſt was driven from men
Among the beſtial herds to range; by thee
Founded in reaſon, loyal, juſt, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the characters
Of Father, Son, and Brother, firſt were known.
Far be it, that I ſhould write thee Sin, or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holieſt place,
Perpetual fountain of domeſtic ſweets,

Whoſe

Whoſe bed is undefil'd and chaſte pronounc'd,
Preſent or paſt, as Saints and Patriarchs us'd.
Here Love his golden ſhafts employs, here lights
His conſtant lamp, and waves his purple wings.

The miſchievous effects which the celibacy and ſolitude of monaſtic inſtitutions produce on that paſſion which ariſes ſo ſpontaneouſly between the ſexes in the human heart, will appear unavoidable, when it is conſidered how abſurdly the founders of theſe religious retreats have frequently endeavoured to guard againſt the danger. The partitions which divide the virtues from their oppoſite vices are ſo ſlender and conjoined, that we ſcarcely reach the limits of the one before we enter to a certain degree the confines of the other. How ridiculous, therefore, is it to conceive that frequent meditation on forbidden pleaſures ſhould be at all likely to eradicate impure ideas from the mind! and yet the Egyptian monaſtics were enjoined to have theſe rules continually in their contemplation: FIRST, that their boſoms muſt remain unagitated by the thoughts of love; that they ſhould never permit their fancies to loiter on voluptuous images; that female beauty, in its faireſt form, and moſt glowing charms, ſhould be incapable of exciting in their hearts the leaſt ſenſation; and that even during the hours of ſleep, their minds ſhould continue untainted by ſuch impure affections. The chaſtity of theſe

ſolitary

ſolitary beings was, on ſome occaſions, actually tried by experiment; but the conſequences which reſulted from ſuch irrational diſcipline were directly the reverſe of thoſe it was intended to produce. The imagination was vitiated; and the inclination rendered ſo corrupt, that neither the examples nor the precepts of more enlightened ages were able to correct their manners, or reclaim them from the machinations of the unclean ſpirit. Numberleſs, indeed, and horrid are the inſtances recorded by RUFFINUS, and other writers, of the perverſions of all ſenſe and reaſon, of all delicacy and refinement, of all virtue and true holineſs, which prevailed in the aſcetic ſolitudes of every deſcription, while the *nuptial ſtate* was held incompatible with the duties of religion, and the ſexes ſeparated from each other, that they might more piouſly, and with leſs interruption, follow its dictates. Some of the fathers of the church defined *female celibacy* to be the only means of living a chaſte and godly life amidſt the impurities of a ſinful world, and of regaining, during the perdition of groſs mortality, the reſemblance of the ſoul's celeſtial origin. The holy happy tie of matrimony they conſidered as a cloak to the indulgence of impure deſires, and launched their anathemas againſt it as an hateful inſtitution. Even the eloquent and pious CHRYSOSTOM ſays, "that a double purpoſe

poſe was intended to be attained by the inſtitution of marriage, *viz.* the propagation of the ſpecies, and the gratification of ſexual affection; but that, as population had ſufficiently covered the face of the earth, the firſt had become no longer neceſſary; and that it was the duty of the ſexes rather to conquer their affections by abſtinence and prayer, than indulge them under ſo thin a diſguiſe. The human ſoul, he admits, muſt, in a ſtate of celibacy, ſubſiſt under a perpetual warfare, and the faculties be in continual ferment; but contends, that piety exiſts in proportion to the difficulties which the ſufferer ſurmounts. The holy fathers ſeem, from the whole ſtrain of their exhortations and reaſonings, to have conſidered female chaſtity in a very ſerious point of view; and there can be no doubt but that it is the brighteſt jewel and moſt becoming ornament of the ſex; but theſe reverend teachers were ſo blinded by their zeal that they loſt all ſight of nature, and miſtakingly conceived that the Great Creator had planted affections in our hearts, and paſſions in our breaſts, only to try our tempers in ſuppreſſing their turbulence, rather than to promote our happineſs, and to anſwer the ends of his creation, by a ſober and rational indulgence of them.

But Nature will not be argued out of her rights *; and theſe abſurd doctrines introduced into

* It may be of ſome advantage to the readers of this work, to hear the ſentiments of a ſound philoſopher upon this ſubject. "The practice of ſelf-denial," ſays he, "or the forbearance of even lawful pleaſures, has been conſidered by almoſt every nation, from the remoteſt ages, as the higheſt exaltation of human virtue; and all have agreed to pay reſpect and veneration to thoſe who abſtained from the delights of life, even when they did not cenſure thoſe who enjoy them. The general voice of mankind, civil and barbarous, confeſſes that the mind and body are at variance, and that neither can be made happy by its proper gratifications, but at the expence of the other; that a pampered body will darken the mind, and an enlightened mind will macerate the body; and never have failed to confer their eſteem on thoſe who prefer intellect to ſenſe, who controul their lower by their higher faculties, and forget the wants and deſires of animal life, for rational diſquiſitions or pious contemplations. The earth has ſcarcely a country ſo far advanced towards political regularity as to divide the inhabitants into claſſes, where ſome orders of men and women are not diſtinguiſhed by voluntary ſeverities, and where the reputation of their ſanctity is not increaſed in proportion to the rigour of their rules, and the exactneſs of their performance. When an opinion to which there is no temptation of intereſt ſpreads wide, and continues long, it may be reaſonably preſumed to have been infuſed by nature, and dictated by reaſon. It has been often obſerved, that the fictions of impoſture, and the illuſions of fancy, ſoon give way to time and experience; and that nothing keeps its ground but TRUTH. But Truth, when it is reduced to practice, eaſily becomes ſubject to caprice and imagination, and many particular acts will be wrong, though their general principles be right. It cannot be denied, that a juſt conviction

into every monaſtic inſtitution throughout Europe a private intercourſe, hoſtile, from its evil

 example,

conviction of the reſtraint neceſſary to be laid upon the appetites, has produced extravagant and unnatural modes of mortification; and INSTITUTIONS, which, however favourably conſidered, will be found to violate NATURE without promoting PIETY. But the doctrine of *ſelf-denial* is not weakened in itſelf by the errors of thoſe who miſinterpret or miſapply it; the encroachment of the appetites upon the underſtanding is hourly perceived; and the ſtate of thoſe whom *ſenſuality* has enſlaved, is known to be in the higheſt degree deſpicable and wretched. The dread of ſuch ſhameful captivity may juſtly raiſe alarms, and wiſdom will endeavour to keep danger at a diſtance. By timely caution, and ſuſpicious vigilance, thoſe deſires may be repreſſed, to which indulgence would ſoon give abſolute dominion; thoſe enemies may be overcome, which, when they have been awhile accuſtomed to victory, can no longer be reſiſted. Nothing is more fatal to happineſs or virtue, than that confidence which flatters us with an opinion of our own ſtrength, and, by aſſuring us of the power of retreat, precipitates us into hazard. Some may ſafely venture farther than others into the regions of delight, lay themſelves more open to the golden ſhafts of pleaſure, and advance nearer to the reſidence of the Syrens; but he that is beſt armed with conſtancy and reaſon, is yet vulnerable in one part or other; and to every man there is a point fixed, beyond which, if he paſſes, he will not eaſily return. It is certainly moſt wiſe, as it is moſt ſafe, to ſtop before he touches the utmoſt limit, ſince every ſtep of advance will more and more entice him to go forward, till he ſhall at laſt enter into the receſſes of voluptuouſneſs, and ſloth and deſpondency cloſe the paſſage behind him. To deny *early* and *inflexibly*, is the only art of checking the impetuoſity of deſire, and of preſerving quiet and innocence. Innocent gratifications may be ſometimes withheld:

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example, to the intereſts both of morality and religion. The nuns of the convent of *Argenteuil*, who choſe ELOISA for their abbeſs, were, in all probability, influenced in their choice by the recollection of her former frailty, and their knowledge of the preſent ruling paſſion of her heart: they meant to provide the abbey with a ſuperior who, if ſhe were not inclined to promote, would feel no diſpoſition to interrupt, their intrigues. The fact certainly was, that during the time ELOISA preſided over the convent, the conduct of the nuns was ſo extremely licentious, that SUGGER, abbot of *St. Dennis*, complained of their irregularities to pope HONORIUS in ſuch a manner, as to induce his holineſs to give the abbot

he that complies with all lawful deſires, will certainly loſe his empire over himſelf, and, in time, either ſubmit his reaſon to his wiſhes, and think all his deſires lawful, or diſmiſs his reaſon as troubleſome and intruſive, and reſolve to ſnatch what he may happen to wiſh, without enquiring about right and wrong. No man, whoſe appetites are his maſters, can perform the duties of his nature with ſtrictneſs and regularity. He that would be ſuperior to external influences, muſt firſt become ſuperior to his own paſſions. Upon him who has reduced his ſenſes to obedience, temptation has loſt its power; he is then able to attend impartially to Virtue, and to execute her commands without heſitation. To ſet the mind above the appetites, is the end of abſtinence, which one of *the fathers* obſerves to be not a virtue, but the ground-work of virtue. By forbearing to do what may be innocently done, we may add hourly new vigour to reſolution, and ſecure the power of reſiſtance when pleaſure or intereſt ſhall lend their charms to guilt."

abbot poſſeſſion of it; and he immediately expelled the negligent prioreſs and her intriguing ſiſters, and eſtabliſhed in their place a monaſtery of his own order. Strong ſuſpicions may, perhaps, prevail againſt the virtue and integrity of ELOISA's character, from the diſſoluteneſs which exiſted in this ſociety; but ſhe was certainly not included by name in the articles of accuſation which the abbot of *St. Dennis* tranſmitted upon this ſubject to the court of ROME; and there is every reaſon to believe that theſe irregularities were carefully concealed from her knowledge. When this lovely victim was preſented with *the veil*, ſome perſons, who pitied her youth, and admired her beauty, repreſented to her the cruel ſacrifice ſhe would make of herſelf by accepting it; but ſhe immediately exclaimed, in the words of CORNELIA, after the death of POMPEY THE GREAT,

"Oh! my lov'd Lord! our fatal marriage draws
On thee this doom, and I the guilty cauſe:
Then while thou goeſt the extremes of fate to prove,
I'll ſhare that fate, and expiate thus my love!"

and accepted the fatal preſent with a conſtancy not to have been expected in a woman who had ſo high a taſte for pleaſures which ſhe might ſtill enjoy. It will, therefore, be eaſily conceived, that her diſtreſs, on being ignominiouſly expelled

from this retreat was exceeding ſevere. She applied to ABELARD to procure her ſome permanent aſylum, where ſhe might have the opportunity of eſtranging herſelf from all earthly weakneſſes and paſſions; and he, by the permiſſion of the biſhop of *Troyes*, reſigned to her the houſe and the chapel of PARACLETE, with its appendages, where ſhe ſettled with a few ſiſters, and became herſelf the foundreſs of a nunnery. Of this monaſtery ſhe continued the ſuperior until ſhe died; and whatever her conduct was among the licentious nuns of *Argenteuil*, ſhe lived ſo regular in this her new and laſt retreat, and conducted herſelf with ſuch exemplary prudence, zeal, and piety, that all her former failings were forgot, her character adored by all who knew her, and her monaſtery in a ſhort time enriched with ſo great a variety of donations, that ſhe was celebrated as the ableſt cultivator of the virtues of forgiveneſs and Chriſtian charity then exiſting. The biſhop of the diſtrict behaved to her as if ſhe had been his own daughter; the neighbouring priors and abbots treated her with all the tenderneſs and attention of a real ſiſter; and thoſe who were diſtreſſed and poor, revered her as their mother. But all her cares, and all her virtues, could not protect her againſt the returning weakneſs of her heart. "Solitude," ſays ſhe, "is inſupportable to a

"mind

" mind that is ill at eaſe; its troubles increaſe in " the midſt of ſilence, and retirement heightens " them. Since I have been ſhut up within " theſe walls, I have done nothing but weep " for our misfortunes; this cloiſter has reſound- " ed with my cries; and, like a wretch con- " demned to eternal ſlavery, I have worn out " my days in grief and ſighing."

The uſeful regulations impoſed by the wiſdom of ST. BENEDICT, upon the votaries of monaſtic retirement, were ſoon neglected. Abſtinence and prayer were ſucceeded by luxury and impiety. The revenues of the ſeveral orders had, by the encreaſed value of property, become ſo great, that they were expended in purchaſing a remiſſion of thoſe duties which their founders had enjoined. The admiſſion of the poor laity relieved the initiated members from the toil of cultivating the demeſne lands, and produced a ſyſtem of indolence and lazineſs. They exchanged their long faſts, and unſavoury diets, for frequent feaſts and the richeſt repaſts; ſubſtituted indolent pride for laborious humility; and loſt entirely their original piety and virtue. ABELARD, indeed, and ſome few other abbots of the tenth century, endeavoured to reſtore the ancient ſeverity of diſcipline, but they were reviled and perſecuted with

the moſt vindictive malice by their contemporaries. The DUKE OF BRITTANY, in order to ſecure ABELARD from the rage with which he was purſued for exerciſing qualities which ought to have procured him admiration and eſteem, gave him the convent of *St. Gildas*, as an aſylum from their hatred. The high character which this monaſtery comparatively enjoyed for regularity and good order, excited a hope that he might here find reſt from his vexations, and conſolation for his griefs. But, inſtead of finding it the ſeat of wiſdom and piety, and the manſion of tranquillity, he diſcovered the moſt diſſolute manners, and abandoned conduct, prevailing in every part of the convent. His mild and rational attempts to reclaim theſe diſorderly brethren, were ſo far from producing the deſired effect upon their minds, that it only provoked their rage, and gave new edge to their malice. Foiled in their endeavours, by conſpiracy and calumny, to diſpoſſeſs him of his ſituation, they attempted, ſeveral times, at their common repaſts, to infuſe poiſon into his victuals; and at length, dreadful to relate! actually adminiſtered, in the ſacramental cup, the poiſoned chalice to his lips, but which he was miraculouſly prevented from taſting. It is, indeed, impoſſible to read the deſcription he has given of his dreadful ſituation

ation in this wild and ſavage community, without ſhuddering at the idea how much an irrational Solitude tends to corrupt the manners and deprave the heart. "I live," ſays he, in his letter to PHILINTUS, "in a barbarous country, "the language of which I do not underſtand. I "have no converſation, but with the rudeſt "people. My walks are on the inacceſſible "ſhore of a ſea which is perpetually ſtormy. "My monks are only known by their diſſolute-"neſs, and living without any rule or order. "Ah! PHILINTUS, were you to ſee my habi-"tation, you would rather think it a ſlaughter-"houſe than a convent. The doors and walks "are without any ornament, except the heads "of wild boars, the antlers of ſtags, the feet "of foxes, and the hides of other animals, which "are nailed up againſt them. The cells are "hung with the ſkins of victims deſtroyed in "in the chace. The monks have not ſo much "as a bell to wake them, and are only rouſed "from their drowſineſs by the howling of dogs "and the croaking of ravens. Nothing diſturbs "their lazineſs or languor, but the rude noiſes "of hunting; and their only alternatives are "riot and reſt. But I ſhould return my thanks "to heaven if that were their only fault. I "endeavour in vain to recall them to their duty; "they all combine againſt me; and I only ex-

" poſe myſelf to continual vexations and dan-
" gers. I imagine I ſee every moment a naked
" ſword hanging over my head. Sometimes they
" ſurround me, and load me with the vileſt
" abuſe; and even when they abandon me,
" I am ſtill left to my own dreadful and tor-
" menting thoughts." This ſingle example would be ſufficient to prove the extraordinary dominion which Solitude has over the human mind. It is, indeed, unleſs it be managed with great good ſenſe, the compleat nurſery of miſchief. The mind is without thoſe numerous incentives to action which are continually occurring in the buſy world; and nothing can contribute to produce irregular and diſorderly paſſions more than the want of ſome purſuit by which the heart is intereſted and the mind employed. The minds of idle perſons are always reſtleſs; their hearts never at perfect eaſe; their ſpirits continually on the fret; and their paſſions goaded to the moſt unwarrantable exceſs.

Idleneſs, even in ſocial life, inflicts the ſevereſt torments on the ſoul; deſtroys the repoſe of individuals; and, when general, frequently endangers the ſafety of the ſtate. TIMOTHEUS, an Egyptian monk, ſurnamed ΑΙΛΟΥΡΟΣ, or *the Cat*, a ſhort time after the Eutychian Controverſy, in the year 457, felt an ambition to fill the epiſcopal

and

and patriarchal chair. The ſplenetic reſtleſſneſs which prevailed among the monks in their ſeveral monaſtic ſolitudes, ſeemed to preſent to his obſerving eye proper inſtruments for the execution of his ſcheme. He was conſcious, from his profound knowledge of the human character, that if men who had ſo long remained in uneaſy and diſſatisfied indolence, could be provoked to activity, their zeal would be as turbulent as their former life had been lazy and ſupine; and that their diſpoſitions might be eaſily turned to the accompliſhment of his wiſhes. The better to effect his purpoſe, he cloathed himſelf in a white garment, crept ſilently in the dead of night to the cells of his companions, and, through a tube, which concealed his voice, while it magnified the ſound of it, hailed every monk by his name. The ſound ſeemed to convey the voice of heaven to the ſuperſtitious ears of the awakened auditors; and the ſagacious and enterprizing trumpeter did not fail to announce himſelf as an ambaſſador of heaven, ſent in the name of the Almighty to command the monks to aſſemble immediately, to conſult on the moſt likely mode of depoſing the Neſtorian heretic PROTERUS, and of raiſing the favoured and orthodox TIMOTHEUS to the epiſcopal throne. The idea of being thus elected to execute this pious rebellion, rouzed all the ſleeping powers of theſe ſolitary and hitherto idle

fanatics; they roſe tumultuouſly at the ſacred ſignal; proclaimed THE CAT as a heaven-elected patriarch; ſolicited him, with friendly violence, not to refuſe the promiſed boon; and burning with all the ardour of expected ſucceſs, marched, in a few days, under the banner of the impoſtor to *Alexandria*, where they inſpired the members of other monaſteries with their own deluſion, and created throughout *Egypt* the wildeſt and moſt tremendous commotions. The populace caught the religious frenzy, and joined in vaſt numbers the monaſtic rout. Aſſiſted by this deſperate rabble, TIMOTHEUS proceeded to the principal church of *Alexandria*, where he was, by a preconcerted arrangement, pompouſly received by two depoſed biſhops, and ordained the Metropolitan of the whole Egyptian territory. PROTERUS was aſtoniſhed at this ſudden irruption, and hurled his anathemas with great art and dexterity againſt the impious audacity of the obſcure monaſtic, who had thus dared to depart from the humility of his ſtation, and to invade with his indolent brethren the rights of ſovereignty; but being well aware of the fury with which this deſcription of men generally act when they are once ſet in motion, and being informed of the vaſt multitude by which they had been joined, he thought it prudent to quit his palace, and to retire to the ſacred ſhelter of the church

of

of ST. QUIRINUS. Heathens and barbarians had heretofore reſpected this venerable ſanctuary; but, upon the preſent occaſion, it was incapable of giving ſafety to its aged refugee. The furious troops of the holy impoſtor burſt with irreſiſtible violence through the walls of this conſecrated edifice, and with their daggers drank the blood of the innocent Pontiff, even upon that altar the very ſight of which ought to have paralized the hand of guilt. His ſurrounding and numerous friends, particularly ſix eccleſiaſtics of great eminence, learning, and piety, ſhared the fate of their unhappy maſter, and were found, when the dreadful maſſacre was over, clinging with fondneſs, in the arms of death, round his mangled body. But it was neceſſary for the murderers to calumniate the purity of that life which they had thus violently and injuriouſly deſtroyed. They accordingly dragged the corpſe of this virtuous patriarch to the moſt public part of the city, and, after the groſſeſt abuſe of his character, and moſt ſcandalous miſrepreſentation of his conduct, hung it on an elevated croſs, and expoſed it to the brutal inſults of the miſguided and deluded populace. To compleat this unmanly outrage, they at length committed the torn and mangled remains of this excellent prelate to the flames, and hurled his aſhes, amidſt the moſt opprobrious and inſulting epithets, into the darkened air; exclaiming,

exclaiming, with horrid imprecations, that the mortal part of ſuch a wretch was not entitled to the rights of ſepulture, or even the tears of friends. So furious and undaunted, indeed, were all the oriental monks, when once rouſed from their monaſtic lethargy, that even the ſoldiers of the Greek emperors cautiouſly avoided meeting them in the field. The fury by which they were actuated was ſo blind, that the pious CHRYSOSTOM, the warmeſt and moſt zealous advocate for monaſtic inſtitutions, trembled at its approach. This celebrated father of the church was born in the year 344, of one of the firſt families of the city of *Antioch*, and added new luſtre to their fame by his virtues and his eloquence. Having finiſhed his ſtudies with wonderful ſucceſs, under LIBANIUS, the greateſt rhetorician of the age, he devoted himſelf to the ſtudy of the law; but religion having planted itſelf deeply in his mind, he quitted all ſecular concerns, and retired into ſolitude among the mountains in the vicinity of the city, where, in dreary caves, he devoted two entire years to penitence and prayer. Ill health however obliging him to return to *Antioch*, he began to preach the word, and was ſoon followed by a hoſt of diſciples. The life of this excellent paſtor was an example to his whole flock. He endeavoured to drive away the wolves from the folds, and ſent miſſionaries even into *Scythia*,

Scythia, to convert its inhabitants to Chriſtianity.* Theſe miſſions, and his various charities, required either conſiderable revenues, or the moſt rigid economy; and the holy patriarch was contented to live in the extremes of poverty, that he might have the better opportunity of relieving the ſufferings of his fellow creatures. The character and conduct of this virtuous pontiff ſoon gained him the hearts of his people, and he ſet himſelf earneſtly to reform the many abuſes which at this time prevailed at *Conſtantinople*. The ſeverity and vehemence, however, with which he declaimed againſt the pride, the luxury, and the rapacity of the great; the zeal with which he endeavoured to reform the vices and miſconduct of the clergy; and the eagerneſs he diſcovered for the converſion of heretics, created him a multitude of enemies; and EUTROPIUS, the favourite of the emperor ARCADIUS; GAINAS, the tyrant, to whom he had refuſed protection for the Arians; THEOPHILUS, of *Alexandria*, the patron of the *Origeniſts*; and the diſciples of ARIUS, whom he baniſhed from *Conſtantinople*, entered into a conſpiracy againſt him; and an occaſion ſoon happened, which gave them the opportunity of taking ample

* CHRYSOSTOM was promoted to the archbiſhoprick of Conſtantinople after the death of NECTARIUS, the ſucceſſor of GREGORY NAZIANZEN.

ample vengeance. The intrepid preacher, convinced that, while he declaimed againſt vice in general, the peculiar vices which prevailed in the court of the empreſs EUDOXIA, and the perſonal miſconduct of the empreſs herſelf, called aloud for his ſevereſt animadverſions, he took every opportunity of expoſing them to the public abhorrence. The reſentment of the court encouraged the diſcontent of the clergy and monks of *Conſtantinople*, who had been very ſeverely diſciplined by the zeal of the archbiſhop. He had condemned from the pulpit the domeſtic females of the clergy of *Conſtantinople*, who, under the name of ſervants or ſiſters, afforded a perpetual occaſion either of ſin or of ſcandal. The ſilent and ſolitary aſcetics, who had ſecluded themſelves from the world, were entitled to the warmeſt approbation of CHRYSOSTOM; but he deſpiſed and ſtigmatized, as the diſgrace of their holy profeſſion, the crowd of degenerate monks, who, from ſome unworthy motives of pleaſure or profit, ſo frequently infeſted the ſtreets of the metropolis. To the voice of perſuaſion, the archbiſhop was obliged to add the leſſon of authority; and in his viſitation through the Aſiatic provinces, he depoſed thirteen biſhops of *Lydia* and *Phrygia*; and declared that a deep corruption of ſimony and licentiouſneſs had infected the whole epiſcopal order. Theſe biſhops

alſo

alſo entered into the confederacy above mentioned, and the excellent CHRYSOSTOM was ſtudiouſly repreſented as the intolerable tyrant of the Eaſtern Church. This eccleſiaſtical conſpiracy was managed by the archbiſhop of *Alexandria*, who, by the invitation of EUDOXIA, landed at *Conſtantinople* with a ſtout body of Egyptian mariners to encounter the populace, and a train of dependent biſhops, to ſecure, by their voices, a majority of a ſynod. The ſynod was convened in the ſuburbs of *Chalcedon*, and was called THE OAK; in which CHRYSOSTOM was condemned of treaſon againſt the empreſs; rudely arreſted, and driven into exile; from whence, however, he was in two days recalled; but, upon a repetition of his imputed offences, was again baniſhed to the remote and deſolate town of *Cucuſus*, among the ridges of *Mount Taurus*, in the *Leſſer Armenia*. On his way to this place, he was detained by ſickneſs at *Ceſarea*, and at length confined to his bed. The biſhop of *Ceſarea*, who had long entertained a ſecret enmity againſt him, unmoved by his fallen fortunes and helpleſs ſtate, ſtirred up the lazy monks of the ſurrounding monaſteries to vengeance againſt him. The fury with which they iſſued from their reſpective cells was incredible; like the ſleeping powder of the preſent age, they burſt into immediate conflagration and exploſion at the touch of that hand by which they

they were fired, and directing their heated animosity against the dying CHRYSOSTOM, surrounded his house, and threatened, that if he did not immediately depart, they would involve it in flames, and bury him in its ruins. The soldiers of the garrison were called out to protect the life of this virtuous ecclesiastic; and, on their arrival at the scene of action, very courteously requested the enraged monks to be quiet, and depart; but the request was treated with contempt and defiance; and it was by the humane resolution of CHRYSOSTOM himself that this tumult was quelled; for, rather than the blood of his fellow creatures should be shed on his account, he desired a litter might be procured, into which, in his almost expiring state, he was roughly laid, and, by his departure from the city, escaped the fury which thus assailed his life.*

It

* CHRYSOSTOM arrived at the place of his confinement; "and the three years," says Mr. GIBBON, "which he spent at *Cucusus*, and the neighbouring town of *Arabossus*, were the last and most glorious of his life. His character was consecrated by absence and persecution; the faults of his administration were no longer remembered, but every tongue repeated the praises of his genius and virtue; and the respectable attention of the Christian world was fixed on a desert spot among the mountains of *Taurus*. From that solitude the archbishop, whose active mind was invigorated by misfortunes, maintained a strict and frequent correspondence with the most distant provinces; exhorted

It is evident, from theſe facts, that the irrational Solitude of monaſtic inſtitutions, particularly that which prevailed in the early ages of Chriſtianity in the Eaſtern parts of the converted world, inſtead of rendering the votaries of it mild, complacent, and humane, filled their minds with the wildeſt notions, and the moſt uncharitable

exhorted the ſeparate congregations of his faithful adherents to perſevere in their allegiance; urged the deſtruction of the temples of *Phenicia*, and the extirpation of the hereſy in the *Iſle of Cyprus*; extended his paſtoral care to the miſſions of *Perſia* and *Scythia*; negociated, by his ambaſſadors, with the Roman Pontiff and the emperor HONORIUS; and boldly appealed, from a partial ſynod, to the ſupreme tribunal of a free and general council. The mind of the illuſtrious exile was ſtill independent; but his captive body was expoſed to the revenge of the oppreſſors, who continued to abuſe the name and authority of ARCADIUS. An order was diſpatched for the inſtant removal of CHRYSOSTOM to the extreme deſert of *Pityus*; and his guards ſo faithfully obeyed the cruel inſtructions, that, before he reached the ſea-coaſt of the Euxine, he expired at *Comana*, in *Pontus*, in the ſixtieth year of his age. The ſucceeding generation acknowledged his innocence and merit. The archbiſhops of the Eaſt, who might bluſh that their predeceſſors had been the enemies of CHRYSOSTOM, were gradually diſpoſed, by the firmneſs of the Roman Pontiff, to reſtore the honours of that venerable name. At the pious ſolicitation of the clergy and people of Conſtantinople, his relics, thirty years after his death, were tranſported from their obſcure ſepulchre to the royal city. The emperor THEODOSIUS advanced to receive them as far as *Chalcedon*, and falling proſtrate on the coffin, implored, in the name of his guilty parents, ARCADIUS and EUDOXIA, the forgiveneſs of the injured ſaint."

ritable and acrimonious paſſions, and foſtered in their hearts the moſt dangerous and deſtructive vices. It is truly ſaid, by a very elegant writer, and profound obſerver of men and manners, that monaſtic inſtitutions unavoidably contract and fetter the human mind; that the partial attachment of A MONK to the intereſts of his Order, which is often incompatible with that of other citizens, the habit of implicit obedience to the will of a ſuperior, together with the frequent return of the weariſome and frivolous duties of the cloiſter, debaſe his faculties, and extinguiſh that generoſity of ſentiment and ſpirit, which qualifies men for thinking and feeling juſtly with reſpect to what is proper in life and conduct; and that FATHER PAUL, of *Venice*, was, perhaps, the only perſon educated in a cloiſter, that ever was altogether ſuperior to its prejudices, or who viewed the tranſactions of men, and reaſoned concerned the intereſts of ſociety, with the enlarged ſentiments of a philoſopher, with the diſcernment of a man converſant in affairs, and with the liberality of a gentleman. Depraved, however, as this order of men has ever been, it was to their prayers and maſſes that all the princes and potentates of more than half the diſcovered regions of the earth confided their ſalvation, and expected, from their interceſſion, divine favour from the Fountain of all Goodneſs and Truth.

Truth. But the fears which theſe artful and intriguing eccleſiaſtics raiſed in the weak or guilty minds of their contemporaries, inſtead of being quieted by the conciliatory and comforting doctrines of the Goſpel of Chriſt, were converted to the purpoſes of their own ſordid avarice, and made ſubſervient to the enjoyment of their vices, and the advancement of their power. They inculcated the notion, that the ſureſt paſſport to eternal bliſs was to overwhelm them with riches, and to indulge them with extraordinary privileges; and every haughty noble, or deſpotic ſovereign, who was anxious to gratify his own wanton pleaſures, and capricious vices, at the expence of his peoples' proſperity and happineſs, endeavoured to reconcile himſelf to his offended God, by bribing theſe ambitious and greedy monaſtics, to grant them abſolution for their deepeſt crimes.* Their hiſtory exhibits, in full view, the melancholy truth, that their hearts were corrupted by the worſt paſſions that diſgrace humanity, and that the diſcipline of the convent was ſeldom productive

* A book, under the German title of *Romiſche Cauzeleytaxe*, which was publiſhed at *Cologne* in the year 1515, gives a long liſt of the ſeveral offences and crimes for which abſolution might, for a valuable conſideration, be purchaſed of the Holy Pontiff. In this black catalogue of human depravity, it appears that the murder of a brother, ſiſter, huſband, wife, or parent, the violation of female chaſtity, and the ſin of fornication, were pardoned upon very eaſy terms.

tive of a ſingle virtue. Enthuſiaſts, indeed, of every deſcription, whoſe ſentiments and feelings are continually at war with the dictates of nature, and who renounce all the pleaſing ſympathies, gentle endearments, kind connections, and rational enjoyments of life, are not likely to entertain any great anxiety for the intereſts or happineſs of others, or to feel the leaſt commiſeration for their ſorrows. Occupied by ſordid and ſelfiſh purſuits, they muſt hate and deſpiſe a ſociety, to the lively enjoyments of which they look back with ſuch keen regret. When the mind, alas! has numbed its ſenſe of ſocial joys, and become a ſtranger to the delightful charms of ſweet domeſtic love; when all affection for the world and its concerns has been ſtudiouſly expelled from the boſom, and no kind feeling or ſocial inclination ſuffered to fill the vacant heart; when man has ſeparated himſelf from his ſpecies, and has not united his ſoul with his Creator, he has loſt all power of being happy himſelf, or of communicating happineſs to others.

The biſhops exceeded the inferior clergy in every kind of profligacy as much as in opulence and power; and, of courſe, their ſuperintending and viſatorial authority was not exerted to leſſen or reſtrain the prevalence of thoſe vices which

which their evil example contributed ſo greatly to encreaſe. Time and chance ſometimes produce extraordinary events; and if a really pious, vigilant, and auſtere prelate aroſe amidſt the general diſſoluteneſs of the age, his ſingle efforts to reclaim theſe ſolitary eccleſiaſtics was ſeldom attended with ſucceſs. Theſe Fathers, indeed, frequently ſcrutinized with great minuteneſs into the practices of the convents; and as they were not ſo able to detect the guilt of incontinency, as ſome philoſophers of the preſent age pretend to be, by the lines and features of the face, they proceeded upon evidence leſs delicate, perhaps, but certainly more demonſtrative and unerring.

The celebrated BOCCACE has, by his witty and ingenious tales, very ſeverely ſatirized the licentiouſneſs and immorality which prevailed during his time in the Italian monaſteries; but, by expoſing the ſcandalous lives, and laſhing the vices, of the monks, nuns, and other orders of the Catholic clergy, he has been decried as a contemner of religion, and as an enemy to true piety. Contemporary hiſtorians have alſo delivered the moſt diſguſting accounts of their intemperance and debauchery. The frailty, indeed, of the female monaſtics was even an article of regular taxation; and the Holy Father did not

not diſdain to fill his coffers with the price of their impurities. The frail nun, whether ſhe had become immured within a convent, or ſtill reſided without its walls, might redeem her loſt honour, and be reinſtated in her former dignity and virtue, for a few ducats. This ſcandalous traffic was carried to an extent that ſoon deſtroyed all ſenſe of morality, and heightened the hue of vice. AMBROSIUS, biſhop of *Camadoli*, a prelate of extraordinary virtue, viſited various convents in his dioceſe, but, in inſpecting their proceedings, he found no traces of virtue, or even of decency, remaining in any one of them; nor was he able, with all the ſagacity he exerciſed on the ſubject, to re-infuſe the ſmalleſt particle of theſe qualities into the degenerated minds of the ſiſterhood.

The reform of the nunneries was the firſt ſtep that diſtinguiſhed the government of SEXTUS THE FOURTH, after he aſcended the papal throne, at the cloſe of the fifteenth century. BOSSUS, a celebrated canon, of the ſtricteſt principles, and moſt inflexible diſpoſition, was the agent ſelected by his holineſs for this arduous atchievment. The Genoeſe convents, where the nuns lived in open defiance of all the rules of decency and precepts of religion, were the firſt objects of his attention. The orations which he publicly

uttered from the pulpit, as well as the private lectures and exhortations which he delivered to the nuns from the confeſſional chair, were fine models not only of his zeal and probity, but of his literature and eloquence. They breathed, in the moſt impreſſive manner, the true ſpirit of Chriſtian purity: but his glowing repreſentations of the bright beauties of Virtue, and the dark deformities of Vice, made little impreſſion upon their corrupted hearts. Deſpiſing the open calumnies of the envious, and the ſecret hoſtilities of the guilty, he proceeded, in ſpite of all diſcouragement and oppoſition, in his highly honourable purſuit; and at length, by his wiſdom and aſſiduity, beheld the faireſt proſpects of ſucceſs daily opening to his view. The rays of hope, however, had ſcarcely beamed upon his endeavours, when they were immediately overclouded by diſappointment. The arm of magiſtracy, which he had wiſely called upon to aid the accompliſhment of his deſign, was enervated by the venality of its hand; and the incorrigible objects of his ſolicitude having freed themſelves by bribery from the terror of the civil power, contemned the reformer's denunciations of eternal vengeance hereafter, and relapſed into their former licentiouſneſs and depravity. A few, indeed, among the great number of nuns who inhabited theſe guilty convents, were converted by the force

of his eloquent remonſtrances, and became afterwards highly exemplary by the virtue and piety of their lives; but the reſt abandoned themſelves to their impious courſes; and, though more vigorous methods were, in a ſhort time, adopted againſt the refractory monaſtics, they ſet all attempts to reform them at defiance. The modes, perhaps, in which their vices were indulged, changed with the character of the age; and as manners grew more refined, the groſs and ſhameful indulgences of the monks and nuns were changed into a more elegant and decent ſtyle of enjoyment. Faſhion might render them more prudent and reſerved in their intrigues; but their paſſions were not leſs vicious, nor their diſpoſitions leſs corrupt.

The diſorderly manners of theſe ſolitary devotees were among the principal cauſes that produced the REFORMATION. There is a point beyond which even depravity cannot go in corrupting the manners of the age. The number and power of the monaſtics, or, as they were at that time called, the *Regular Clergy*, was certainly great, and their reſiſtance to the approaches of reformation obſtinate; but the temper of the times had changed, and the glorious and beneficial event was at length accompliſhed. The Catholics viewed the diſmemberment of their church

church as a fatal ſtroke to their intereſt and power; but it has ſince been confeſſed, by every candid and rational member of this communion, to be an event which has contributed to advance morals to a higher degree of perfection than they had ever before attained ſince the introduction of Chriſtianity, and to reſtore the diſcipline of the church to ſome portion of its original purity.

The pure ſpirit of the Goſpel of Chriſt breathes forth a holy religion, founded on meekneſs, charity, kindneſs, and brotherly love; but fanaticiſm, when joined to a ſyſtematic and irrational ſolitude, only produces the rank and poiſonous fruits we have already deſcribed. The trivial, querulous, and intolerant ſuperſtitions, which during ſo many ages eclipſed the reaſon and morals of mankind, and obſcured, in clouds of luſt and cruelty, the bright rays of evangelical truth, were the ſad effects of irrational ſolitude. The beſt affections of nature were perverted or ſuppreſſed; all the gentle offices of humanity were neglected; moral ſentiment deſpiſed; and the angel voice of Piety unheard, or converted into the violent vociferations of hatred, and the cries of perſecution. The loud clangors of pretended orthodoxy reſounded with ſanguinary hoſtilities from ſhore to ſhore; the earth was deluged with the

blood of thoſe who dared to deny, or even to doubt, the abſurd and idle dogmas which the monks every where invented; and their horrid barbarities were attempted to be juſtified by propagating the notion, that ſeverity with heretics was the only mode of preſerving the true faith. Oh, how blind is human folly! how obdurate are hearts vitiated by pride! How can that be the true faith which tears aſunder every ſocial tie, annihilates all the feelings of nature, places cruelty and horror on the throne of humanity and love, and ſcatters ferocious fury and inſatiable hatred through the paths of life? But we may now indulge a pleaſing hope that the period is at hand, when the ſacred TEMPLE OF RELIGION, purified by the labours of learned and truly pious men, from the foul ſtains with which fanaticiſm and ambition have ſo long defaced it, ſhall be reſtored to its own divine ſimplicity; and only the voice of gentleneſs, of love, of peace, of VIRTUE, and of godlineſs, be heard within its walls. Then will every Chriſtian be truly taught the only means by which his days may be uſeful and his life happy; and Catholics, Lutherans, Calviniſts, Proteſtants, and every really religious claſs of men, will unite in acts of ſincere benevolence and univerſal peace. No auſtere, gloomy, and diſpiriting duties; no irrational penances and unnatural mortifications, will

be enjoined; no intolerant cruelties be inflicted; no unſocial inſtitutions eſtabliſhed; no rites of ſolitary ſelfiſhneſs be required; but REASON and RELIGION in divine perfection will reaſſume their reigns; an unaffected and ſincere devotion will occupy every mind; the Almighty will be worſhipped *in ſpirit* and *in truth*; and we ſhall be convinced that "The wicked are like the "troubled ſea when it cannot reſt; but that the "work of righteouſneſs is peace; and the effect "of righteouſneſs quietude and aſſurance for "ever." To effect this, a rational retirement from the tumults of the world will be occaſionally neceſſary, in order to *commune with our own hearts, and be ſtill*, and to diſpoſe our minds to ſuch a train of thinking, as ſhall prepare us, when the giddy whirl of life is finiſhed, for the ſociety of more exalted ſpirits.

Oh! would mankind but make fair *Truth* their guide,
And force the helm from Prejudice and Pride,
Were once theſe maxims fix'd, that GOD's our friend,
VIRTUE our good, and HAPPINESS our end,
How ſoon muſt reaſon o'er the world prevail,
And *Error*, *Fraud*, and *Superſtition* fail!
None would hereafter, then, with groundleſs fear,
Deſcribe THE ALMIGHTY cruel and ſevere;
Predeſtinating ſome, without pretence,
To heaven; and ſome to hell for no offence;
Inflicting endleſs pains for tranſient crimes,
And favouring ſects or nations, men or times.

To pleaſe him, none would fooliſhly forbear
Or food or reſt, or itch in ſhirts of hair;
Or deem it merit to believe, or teach,
What Reaſon contradicts, or cannot reach;
None would fierce ZEAL for PIETY miſtake,
Or Malice, for whatever tenet's ſake,
Or think ſalvation to one ſect confin'd,
And heaven too narrow to contain mankind:
No more would brutal rage diſturb our peace,
But envy, hatred, war, and diſcord ceaſe;
Our own and others' good each hour employ,
And all things ſmile with univerſal joy.
Fair VIRTUE then, with pure RELIGION join'd,
Would regulate and bleſs the human mind,
And man be what his Maker firſt deſign'd.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

OF THE DANGER OF IDLENESS IN SOLITUDE

IDLENESS is truly ſaid to be the root of all evil; and Solitude certainly encourages in the generality of its votaries this baneful diſpoſition. Nature has ſo framed the character of man, that his happineſs eſſentially depends on his paſſions being properly intereſted, his imagination buſied, and his faculties employed; but theſe engagements are ſeldom found in the vacant ſcenes and tedious hours of retirement from the world, except by thoſe who have acquired the great and happy art of furniſhing their own amuſements: an art which, as we have already ſhewn, can never be learnt in the irrational ſolitude of caves and cells.

The idleneſs which ſolitude is ſo apt to induce, is dangerous in proportion to the natural ſtrength, activity, and ſpirit of the mind; for it is obſerved, that the higheſt characters are frequently goaded by that reſtleſſneſs which accompanies leiſure, to acts of the wildeſt outrage and greateſt enormity. The ancient legiſlators were

ſo conſcious that indolence, whether indulged in Solitude or in Society, is the nurſe of civil commotion, and the chief inſtigator of moral turpitude, that they wiſely framed their laws to prevent its exiſtence. SOLON obſerving that the city was filled with perſons who aſſembled from all parts on account of the great ſecurity in which people lived in ATTICA, that the country withal was poor and barren, and being conſcious that merchants, who traffic by ſea, do not uſe to tranſport their goods where they can have nothing in exchange, turned the attention of the citizens to manufactures; and for this purpoſe made a law, that he who was three times convicted of idleneſs, ſhould be deemed *infamous*; that no ſon ſhould be obliged to maintain his father if he had not taught him a trade; that trades ſhould be accounted *honourable*; and that the council of the *Areopagus* ſhould examine into every man's means of living, and chaſtiſe the idle with the greateſt ſeverity. DRACO conceived it ſo neceſſary to prevent the prevalency of a vice to which man is by nature prone, and which is ſo deſtructive to his character, and ruinous to his manners, that he puniſhed idleneſs with death. The tyrant PISISTRATUS, as THEOPHRASTUS relates, was ſo convinced of the importance of preventing idleneſs among his ſubjects, that he made a law againſt

againſt it, which produced at once induſtry in the country, and tranquillity in the city. PERICLES, who, in order to relieve ATHENS from a number of lazy citizens, whoſe lives were neither employed in virtuous actions, nor guarded from guilt by habits of induſtry, planted colonies in *Cherſoneſus*, *Naxos*, *Andros*, *Thrace*, and even in *Italy*, and ſent them thither; for this ſagacious ſtateſmen ſaw the danger of indulging this growing vice, and wiſely took precautions to prevent it. Nothing, indeed, contributes more eſſentially to the tranquillity of a nation, and to the peaceful demeanour of its inhabitants, than thoſe artificial wants which luxury introduces; for by creating a demand for the faſhionable articles, they engage the attention, and employ the hands, of a multitude of manufacturers and artificers, who, if they were left in that reſtleſs indolence which the want of work creates, would certainly be unhappy themſelves, and in all probability would be fomenting miſchief in the minds of others. To ſuſpend, only for one week, the vaſt multitudes that are employed in the ſeveral mechanical trades and manufactories in *Great Britain*, would be to run the riſque of involving the metropolis of that great, flouriſhing and powerful country once more in flames; for it would be converting the populace into an aptly diſpoſed train of combuſtible matter, which be-

ing kindled by the leaſt ſpark of accidental enthuſiaſm, by the heat of political faction, or, indeed, by their own internal fermentation, would explode into the moſt flagrant enormities. Nature, it is ſaid, abhors *a vacuum*; and this old Peripatetic principle may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace any thing, however abſurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. The ſame author alſo obſerves, that every man may date the predominance of thoſe deſires that diſturb his life, and contaminate his conſcience, from ſome unhappy hour when too much leiſure expoſed him to their incurſions; for that *he* has lived with little obſervation, either on himſelf or others, who does not know, that to be idle is to be vicious. "Many writers of eminence in phyſic," continues this eminent writer, whoſe works not only diſcloſe his general acquaintance with life and manners, but a profound knowledge of human nature, "have laid out their diligence upon the conſideration of thoſe diſtempers to which men are expoſed by particular ſtates of life, and very learned treatiſes have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the ſea, and the mines. There are, indeed, few employments which a man accuſtomed to academical enquiries, and medical refinements, would not find reaſon for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning

learning or experience inform him, that almoſt every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and ſafer than *a life of ſloth*. The neceſſity of action is not only demonſtrable from the fabric of the body, but evident from obſervation of the univerſal practice of mankind; who, for the preſervation of health in thoſe whoſe rank or wealth exempts them from the neceſſity of lucrative labours, have invented ſports and diverſions, though not of equal uſe to the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to thoſe who practiſe them, and differing only from the drudgery of the huſbandman or manufacturer, as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful ſenſe of compulſion. The huntſman riſes early, purſues his game through all the dangers and obſtructions of the chace, ſwims rivers, and ſcales precipices, till he returns home no leſs harraſſed than the ſoldier, and has, perhaps, ſometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds and death: yet he has no motive to excite his ardour; he is neither ſubject to the command of a general, nor dreads the penalties of neglect or diſobedience: he has neither profits nor honours to expect from his perils and conqueſts; but acts without the hope of mural or civic garlands, and muſt content himſelf with the praiſe of his tenants and companions. But ſuch is the conſtitution of MAN,

that *labour is its own reward*; nor will any external incitements be requiſite, if it be conſidered how much happineſs is gained, and how much miſery eſcaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body. Eaſe is the moſt that can be hoped from a ſedentary and inactive habit; but eaſe is a mere neutral ſtate between pain and pleaſure. The dance of ſpirits, the bound of vigour, readineſs of enterprize, and defiance of fatigue, are reſerved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres; that keeps his limbs pliant with motion; and, by frequent expoſure, fortifies his frame againſt the common accidents of cold and heat. With eaſe, however, if it could be ſecured, many would be content; but nothing terreſtrial can be kept at a ſtand. EASE, if it is not riſing into pleaſure, will be ſettling into pain; and whatever hopes the dreams of ſpeculation may ſuggeſt, of obſerving the proportion between retirement and labour, and keeping the body in a healthy ſtate by ſupplies exactly equal to its weight, we know that, in effect, the vital powers, unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid, decay, and die. It is neceſſary to that perfection of which our preſent ſtate is capable, that the mind and body ſhould both be kept in action; that neither the faculties of the one nor the other ſhould be ſuffered to grow lax or torpid for want of uſe; that neither health can be purchaſed

chaſed by voluntary ſubmiſſion to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the expence of that health, which muſt enable it either to give pleaſure to its poſſeſſor, or aſſiſtance to others. It is too frequently the pride of ſtudents, to deſpiſe thoſe amuſements which give to the reſt of mankind ſtrength of limbs and chearfulneſs of heart. Solitude and contemplation are, indeed, ſeldom conſiſtent with ſuch ſkill in common exerciſes or ſports, as is neceſſary to make them practiſed with delight; and no man is willing to do that of which the neceſſity is not preſſing, when he knows that his aukwardneſs but makes him ridiculous. I have always admired the wiſdom of thoſe by whom our female education was inſtituted, for having contrived that every woman, of whatever condition, ſhould be taught ſome arts of manufacture, by which the vacuities of recluſe and domeſtic leiſure may be filled up. Theſe arts are more neceſſary, as the weakneſs of their ſex, and the general ſyſtem of life, debar ladies from many employments which, by diverſifying the circumſtances of men, preſerve them from being cankered by the ruſt of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happineſs of the world may be the conſequence of this judicious regulation. Perhaps the moſt powerful fancy might be unable to figure the confuſion and ſlaughter that would be produced by ſo many piercing

piercing eyes, and vivid underſtandings, turned looſe upon mankind, with no other buſineſs than to ſparkle and intrigue, to perplex and to deſtroy. For my own part, whenever chance brings within my obſervation a knot of miſſes buſy at their needles, I conſider myſelf as in THE SCHOOL OF VIRTUE; and though I have no extraordinary ſkill in plain-work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much ſatisfaction as their governeſs, becauſe I regard them as providing a ſecurity againſt the moſt dangerous enſnarers of the ſoul, by enabling them to exclude *Idleneſs* from their ſolitary moments, and with Idleneſs, her attendant train of paſſions, fancies, chimeras, fears, ſorrows, and deſires. OVID and CERVANTES will inform them that Love has no power but on thoſe whom he catches unemployed: and HECTOR, in *the Iliad*, when he ſees ANDROMACHE overwhelmed with tears, ſends her for conſolation to the loom and the diſtaff.*" Certain it is, that wild wiſhes, and vain

* ANDROMACHE! my ſoul's far better part,
Why with untimely ſorrows heaves thy heart?
'Till fate condemns me to the ſilent tomb,
No hoſtile hand can antedate my doom.
Fix'd is the term to all the race of earth,
And ſuch the hard condition of our birth,
No force can then reſiſt, no flight can ſave;
All ſink alike, the fearful and the brave.

No

vain imaginations, never take ſuch firm poſſeſſion of the mind, as when it is found empty and unemployed.

IDLENESS, indeed, was the ſpreading root from which all the vices and crimes of the oriental nuns ſo luxuriantly branched. Few of them had any taſte for ſcience, or were enabled, by the habits either of reflection or induſtry, to charm away the tediouſneſs of SOLITUDE, or to relieve that wearineſs which muſt neceſſarily accompany their abſtracted ſituation. The talents with which nature had endowed them were uncultivated; the glimmering lights of reaſon were obſcured by a blind and headlong zeal; and their tempers ſoured by the circumſtances of their forlorn condition. Certain it is, that the only means of avoiding unhappineſs and miſery in Solitude, and perhaps in Society alſo, is to keep the

No more—but haſten to thy taſk at home;
There guide the ſpindle, and direct the loom:
Me Glory ſummons to the martial ſcene;
The field of combat is the ſphere of men.
Where heroes war the foremoſt place I claim:
The firſt in danger, as the firſt in fame.
Thus having ſaid, the glorious chief reſumes
His tow'ry helmet, black with ſhading plumes.
His princeſs parts with a prophetic ſigh;
Unwilling parts, and oft reverts her eye,
That ſtream'd at every look; then moving ſlow,
Sought her own palace, and indulg'd her woe.

the mind continually engaged in, or occupied by, ſome laudable purſuit. The earlieſt profeſſors of a life of Solitude, although they removed themſelves far from the haunts of men, among "caverns deep" and "deſerts idle," where nature denied her ſons the moſt common of her bleſſings, employed themſelves in endeavouring to cultivate the rude and barren ſoil during thoſe intervals in which they were not occupied in the ordinary labours of religion; and even thoſe whoſe extraordinary ſanctity confined them the whole day to their cells, found the neceſſity of filling up their leiſure, by exerciſing the manual arts for which they were reſpectively ſuited. The rules, indeed, which were originally eſtabliſhed in moſt of the convents, ordained that the time and attention of a monk ſhould never be for a moment vacant or unemployed; but this excellent precept was ſoon rendered obſolete; and the ſad conſequences which reſulted from its non-obſervance we have already, in ſome degree, deſcribed.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

THE CONCLUSION.

THE anxiety with which I have endeavoured to deſcribe THE ADVANTAGES and THE DISADVANTAGES which, under particular circumſtances, and in particular ſituations, are likely to be experienced by thoſe who devote themſelves to ſolitary retirement, may, perhaps, occaſion me to be viewed by ſome as its romantic panegyriſt, and by others as its uncandid cenſor. I ſhall, therefore, endeavour, in this concluding chapter, to prevent a miſconſtruction of my opinion, by explicitly declaring the inferences which ought in fairneſs to be drawn from what I have ſaid.

The advocates for a life of uninterrupted SOCIETY will, in all probability, accuſe me of being a moroſe and gloomy philoſopher; an inveterate enemy to ſocial intercourſe; who, by recommending a melancholy and ſullen ſecluſion, and interdicting mankind from enjoying the pleaſures of life, would ſour their tempers, ſubdue their affections, annihilate the beſt feelings of the heart, pervert the noble faculty of reaſon, and

and thereby once more plunge the world into that dark abyſs of barbariſm, from which it has been ſo happily reſcued by the eſtabliſhment and civilization of ſociety.

The advocates for a life of continual SOLITUDE will moſt probably, on the other hand, accuſe me of a deſign to deprive the ſpecies of one of the moſt pleaſing and ſatisfactory delights,* by exciting an unjuſt antipathy, raiſing an unfounded alarm, depreciating the uſes, and aggravating the abuſes, of SOLITUDE; and by theſe means

* But the right of indulging this delight, even ſuppoſing it to exiſt, is denied by a very able philoſopher. "Some of thoſe ſages," ſays he, "that have exerciſed their abilities in the enquiry after *the ſupreme good*, have been of opinion, that the higheſt degree of earthly happineſs is quiet; a calm repoſe both of mind and body, undiſturbed by the ſight of folly, or the noiſe of buſineſs, the tumults of public commotion, or the agitations of private intereſts: a ſtate in which the mind has no other employment, but to obſerve and regulate her own motions, to trace thought from thought, combine one image with another, raiſe ſyſtems of ſcience, and form theories of virtue. To the ſcheme of theſe ſolitary ſpeculatiſts it has been juſtly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being uſeleſs: that mankind is one vaſt republic, where every individual receives many benefits from the labours of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay; and that where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from miſery, none have a right to withdraw from their taſk of vigilance, or to be indulged in idle wiſdom or ſolitary pleaſures."

means of endeavouring to encourage that ſpirit of licentiouſneſs and diſſipation which ſo ſtrongly marks the degeneracy, and tends to promote the vices of the age.

The reſpective advocates for theſe opinions, however, equally miſtake the intent and view I had in compoſing this Treatiſe. I do ſincerely aſſure them, that it was very far from my intention to cauſe a relaxation of the exerciſe of any of the civil duties of life; to impair in any degree the ſocial diſpoſitions of the human heart; to leſſen any inclination to rational Retirement; or to prevent the beneficent practice of *ſelf-communion*, which Solitude is beſt calculated to promote. The fine and generous philanthropy of that mind which, entertaining notions of univerſal benevolence, ſeeks to feel a love for, and to promote the good of, the whole human race, can never be injured by an attachment to domeſtic pleaſures, or by cultivating the ſoft and gentle affections which are only to be found in the ſmall circles of private life, and can never be truly enjoyed, except in the boſom of LOVE, or the arms of FRIENDSHIP: nor will an occaſional and rational retirement from the tumults of the world leſſen any of the noble ſympathies of the human heart; but, on the contrary, by enlarging thoſe ideas and feelings

feelings which have ſprung from the connections and dependencies which its votary may have formed with individuals, and by generalizing his particular intereſts and concerns, may enable him to extend the *ſocial principle*, and encreaſe the circle of his benevolence.

God loves from whole to parts; but human ſoul
Muſt riſe from *individual* to *whole*.
Self-love but ſerves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the ſmall pebble ſtirs the peaceful lake:
The centre mov'd, a circle ſtrait ſucceeds;
Another ſtill, and ſtill another ſpreads:
Friend, parent, neighbour, firſt it will embrace;
His country next; and next, all human race.

The chief deſign of this work was to exhibit the neceſſity of combining the uſes of SOLITUDE with thoſe of SOCIETY, to ſhew, in the ſtrongeſt light, the advantages they may mutually derive from each other; to convince mankind of the danger of running into either extreme; to teach the advocate for UNINTERRUPTED SOCIETY, how highly all the ſocial virtues may be improved, and its vices eaſily abandoned, by habits of ſolitary abſtraction; and the advocate for CONTINUAL SOLITUDE, how much that indocility and arrogance of character which is contracted by a total abſence from

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from the world, may be corrected by the urbanity of Society, and by the company and converſation of the learned and polite.*

PETRARCH, while in the prime of life, and amidſt the happieſt exertions of his extraordinary genius, quitted all the ſeducing charms of ſociety, and retired from Love and *Avignon*, to indulge his mind in literary purſuits, and to relieve his heart from the unfortunate paſſion by which it was enthralled. No ſituation he conceived was ſo favourable for theſe purpoſes as the highly romantic and delightful ſolitude of *Vaucluſe*. It was ſituated within view of the Mediterranean Sea, in a little valley, incloſed by a ſemi-circular barrier of rocks, on a plain as beautiful as the vale

* "I am ſure," ſays LORD SHAFTESBURY, "that both HOMER and VIRGIL heartily joined in a love of RETIREMENT. Not only the beſt authors, indeed, but the beſt company, require this ſeaſoning. Society cannot be rightly enjoyed, without abſtinence and ſeparate thought. All grows inſipid, dull, and tireſome, without the help of ſome intervals of retirement. Lovers do not underſtand the intereſt of their loves, who, by their good will, would never be parted for a moment. Friends are not diſcreet who wiſh to live together on ſuch terms. What reliſh then muſt the world have, that common world of mixed and undiſtinguiſhed company, without a little SOLITUDE? without ſtepping now and then aſide out of the road and beaten track of life, that tedious circle of noiſe and ſhew, which forces wearied mankind to ſeek relief from every poor diverſion?"

vale of *Tempe*. The rocks were high, bold, and groteſque; and the valley was divided by a river, along the banks of which were meadows and paſtures of a perpetual verdure. A path, on the left ſide of the river, led, in gentle windings, to the head of this vaſt amphitheatre. At the foot of the higheſt rock, and directly in front of the valley, was a prodigious cavern, hollowed by the hand of Nature, from whence aroſe a ſpring almoſt as celebrated as that of *Helicon*. The gloom of the cavern, which was acceſſible when the waters were low, was tremendous. It conſiſted of two excavations; the one forming an arch of ſixty feet high; and the other, which was within, of thirty feet. In the centre of this ſubterraneous rock was an oval baſon, of one hundred and eight feet diameter, into which that copious ſtream which forms the river SORGIA riſes ſilently, without even a jet or bubble. The depth of this baſon has eluded all attempts to fathom it. In this charming retreat, while he vainly endeavoured, during a period of twenty years, to forget, he enabled himſelf to endure the abſence of his beloved LAURA, and to compare, with the higheſt ſatisfaction, the pure pleaſures of rural retirement with the falſe joys of a vicious and corrupted court, the manners and principles of which, indeed, he had always had good ſenſe enough to diſcover and

deſpiſe.

deſpiſe. But this Solitude, with all its charms, could not at length prevent him from returning to the more ſplendid and buſy ſcenes of public life. The advantages he had derived from a retreat of twenty years would, he conceived, enable him to mix with the world, without the danger of being corrupted by its vices; and, after reaſoning with himſelf for ſome time in this way, he ſuddenly abandoned the peaceful privacy of *Vaucluſe*, and precipitated himſelf into the gayeſt and moſt active ſcenes of a luxurious city. The inhabitants of *Avignon* were amazed to behold the hermit of *Vaucluſe*, the tender fugitive from Love, the philoſophic contemner of Society, the eloquent champion of Solitude, who could ſcarcely exiſt, except in the midſt of romantic rocks and flowery foreſts, ſhining all at once the bright ſtar of the faſhionable hemiſphere, and the choice ſpirit of every private and public entertainment.

We're ſadly ignorant, when we hope to find
In ſhades a med'cine for a troubled mind;
Wan Grief will haunt us whereſoe'er we go,
Sigh in the breeze, and in the ſtreamlet flow:
There pale *Inaction* pines his life away,
And, ſatiate, curſes the return of day:
There Love, inſatiate, rages wild with pain,
Endures the blaſt, or plunges in the main:
There Superſtition broods o'er all her fears,
And yells of demons in the zephyr hears.

He

He who a hermit is reſolv'd to dwell,
And bid a ſocial life a long farewel,
Is impious ——————

It has already been obſerved, upon the authority of a very accurate and profound obſerver of nature, that a very extraordinary temperament of mind, and conſtitution of body, are required to ſuſtain, with tranquillity and endurance, the various fatigues of continued Solitude; and certain it is, that a human creature, who is conſtantly pent up in ſecluſion, muſt, if he be not of a very exalted character, ſoon become melancholy and miſerable. Happineſs, like every other valuable quality, cannot be completely poſſeſſed, without encountering many dangers, and conquering many difficulties. The prize is great, but the taſk is arduous. A healthy body, and a vigorous mind, are as eſſentially neceſſary to the enterprize, as equal courage and fortitude are to its ſucceſs. The bold adventurer, who, deſtitute of theſe reſources, quits the bays and harbours of ſociety, ſhallow, rocky, and dangerous as they undoubtedly are, and commits himſelf to the wild and expanſive ſea of Solitude, will ſink into its deep and diſtaſtrous bed, without a hold to ſave him from deſtruction. The few inſtances we have already given, to which many more might eaſily be added, furniſhes unequivocal teſtimony

teſtimony of the truth of this grand precept, "*It is not good for man to be alone*;" which was given by the great Author of Nature, and imprinted in characters ſufficiently legible on the human heart.

God never made a ſolitary man;
T'would jar the concord of his general plan.
Should man through nature ſolitary roam,
His will his ſovereign, every where his home,
What force would guard him from the lion's jaw?
What ſwiftneſs ſave him from the panther's paw?
Or ſhould Fate lead him to ſome ſafer ſhore,
Where panthers never prowl, nor lions roar,
Where liberal Nature all her charms beſtow,
Suns ſhine, birds ſing, flowers bloom, and waters flow,
Still diſcontented, though ſuch glories ſhone,
He'd ſigh and murmur to be there alone.

Content cannot be procured, except by ſocial intercourſe, or a judicious communion with thoſe whom congenial taſtes, and ſimilar talents and diſpoſitions, point out for our companions. The civilization of man, from whence the ſpecies derive ſuch happy conſequences, reſults entirely from a proper management of the *ſocial principle:* even the ſource of his ſupport, the amelioration of the otherwiſe rude and unprofitable earth, can only be attained by ſocial combination. How erroneous a notion, therefore, muſt the minds of thoſe men have formed of "their

" beings' end and aim," and how ſtrong muſt their antipathies to the ſpecies be, who, like a certain celebrated French hermit, would chuſe a ſtation among the craters of VESUVIUS, as a place which afforded them greater ſecurity than the ſociety of mankind. The idea of being able to produce our own happineſs from the ſtores of amuſement and delight which we ourſelves may poſſeſs, independently of all communication with or aſſiſtance from others, is certainly extremely flattering to the natural pride of man; but even if this were poſſible, and that a ſolitary enthuſiaſt could work up his feelings to a higher and more laſting degree of felicity than an active inhabitant of the world, amidſt all its ſeducing vices, and enchanting follies, is capable of enjoying, it would not follow that SOCIETY is not the province of all thoſe whom peculiar circumſtances has not unfitted for its duties and enjoyments. It is, indeed, a falſe and deceitful notion, that a purer ſtream of happineſs is to be found in the delightful bowers of Solitude than in the buſy walks of men. Neither of theſe ſtations enjoy excluſively this envied ſtream; for it flows along the vale of peace, which lies between the two extremes; and thoſe who follow it with a ſteady pace, without deviating too widely from its brink on either ſide, will reach its ſource, and taſte it at its ſpring. But devious,

to a certain degree, muſt be the walk; for the enjoyments of life are beſt attained by being varied with judgment and diſcretion. The fineſt joys grow nauſeous to the taſte when the cup of pleaſure is drained to its dregs. The higheſt delight loſes its attraction by too frequent recurrence. It is only by a proper mixture and combination of the pleaſures of Society with thoſe of Solitude, of the gay and lively recreations of the world with the ſerene and tranquil ſatisfactions of Retirement, that we can enjoy each in its higheſt reliſh. Life is intolerable without ſociety; and ſociety loſes half its charms by being too eagerly and conſtantly purſued. Society, indeed, by bringing men of congenial minds and ſimilar diſpoſitions together, and uniting them by a community of purſuits, and a reciprocal ſympathy of intereſts, may greatly aſſiſt the cauſe of TRUTH and VIRTUE, by advancing the means of human knowledge, and multiplying the ties of human affections; and ſo far as the feſtive board, the lively dance, the brilliant coterie, and other elegant and faſhionable paſtimes, contribute to theſe ends, they are truly valuable, and deſerve not only encouragement, but approbation. On this principle the various clubs which are formed by artizans, and other inferior orders in ſociety, ought to be reſpected. The mind, in order to preſerve

its uſeful activity and proper tone, muſt be occaſionally relaxed, which cannot be ſo beneficially effected as by means of aſſociations founded on the purſuit of ſome common pleaſure. A friendly meeting, or a ſocial entertainment, exhilarates the ſpirits, exerciſes the faculties of the mind, calls forth the feelings of the heart, and creates, when properly formed and indulged, a reciprocity of kindneſs, confidence, and eſteem. It ſoftens the ſeverity of virtue, while it ſtrengthens and enforces its effects. I therefore ſincerely exhort my diſciples not to abſent themſelves moroſely from public places,* nor to avoid the ſocial throng; which cannot fail to afford to judicious, rational, and feeling minds, many ſubjects both of amuſement and inſtruction. It is true that we cannot reliſh the pleaſures, and taſte the advantages, of ſociety, without being able to give a patient

* "To every place of public entertainment," ſays an Engliſh writer, "we go with expectation and deſire of being pleaſed; we meet with others who are brought by the ſame motives; no one will be the firſt to own the diſappointment: one face reflects the ſmile of another, till each believes the reſt delighted, and endeavours to catch and to tranſmit the circulating rapture. In time all are deceived by the cheat to which all contribute. The fiction of happineſs is propagated by every tongue, and confirmed by every look, till at laſt all profeſs the joy which they do not feel; conſent to yield to the general deluſion; and when the voluntary dream is at an end, lament that bliſs is of ſo ſhort a duration."

patient hearing to the tongue of folly, to excuſe error, to bear with infirmity, to view mediocrity of talents without ſcorn, and illiberality of ſentiment without retort; to indulge frivolity of behaviour; and even to forgive rudeneſs of manners; but the performance of theſe conditions meets with its own reward; for it is ſcarcely credible, how very much our own tempers and diſpoſitions are ameliorated, and our underſtandings improved, by bearing with the different tempers, and humouring the perverſe diſpoſitions, of others: we experience by ſuch a conduct the high delight of pleaſing others, and the great advantage of improving ourſelves.

Delightful, however, as ſocial pleaſures naturally are to the human mind; neceſſary as they certainly are, under proper regulations, to the preſervation of the ſpirits; and beneficial as they may undoubtedly be rendered, by judicious choice and wiſe reflection, it is not every perſon who withdraws himſelf from the highly coloured ſcenes of public life to the ſhades of privacy and retirement, that deſerves the imputation generally caſt on ſuch characters, of being inclined to ſullenneſs and miſanthropy. There are many who ſeek the retreats of Solitude for the very purpoſe of rendering their efforts more uſeful to Society; many who relinquiſh the endearments of private friendſhip,

and the applauſes of public approbation, only the more nobly to deſerve them; and many, whoſe ſouls are ſo bitterly tormented by the anguiſh of misfortune, and the ſickneſs of ſorrow, that they find no relief from ſociety, and recede from its ſcenes, to avoid giving diſturbance to that gaiety which they are incapable of enjoying, and to prevent their fractious feelings from moleſting any but themſelves. There are others who retire from the world to purſue objects the moſt glorious to the individual, and moſt uſeful to mankind; the attainment of which can only be hoped for from the advantages which Solitude affords. Glowing with a ſublime and generous ſpirit, they ſacrifice the joys of life, the charms of ſociety, and even the advantages of health, to ſhew their attachment to the ſpecies; and, immured from the ſight of this world, toil, with indefatigable induſtry, for its benefit, without expecting any other reward than the ſatisfaction reſulting from the ſenſe of having promoted the intereſt, and advanced the happineſs, of their fellow creatures.* So alſo,

Sage

* The ſuperior and highly exalted character which ZIMMERMAN ſeems to have had in view in this latter deſcription, has been very finely drawn by that great ſtateſman and philoſopher LORD BOLINGBROKE, in his celebrated Letter "*On the Spirit of Patriotiſm.*" "The Author of Nature," ſays his Lordſhip,

Sage Reflection, bent with years;
Conſcious Virtue, void of fears;
Muffled Silence, wood-nymph ſhy;
Meditation's piercing eye;

Lordſhip, "has thought fit to mingle, from time to time, among the ſocieties of men, a few, and but a few, of thoſe on whom he is graciouſly pleaſed to beſtow a larger portion of the *ethereal ſpirit* than is given in the ordinary courſe of his providence to the ſons of men. Theſe are they who engroſs almoſt the whole reaſon of the ſpecies, who are born to inſtruct, to guide, and to preſerve; who are deſigned to be the tutors and the guardians of human kind. When they prove ſuch, they exibit to us examples of the higheſt virtue; and they deſerve to have their feſtivals kept, inſtead of that pack of *Anchorites* and *Enthuſiaſts* with whoſe names the calendar is crowded and diſgraced: But when theſe men apply their talents to other purpoſes, when they ſtrive to be GREAT, and deſpiſe being GOOD, they commit a moſt ſacrilegious breach of truſt; they pervert the means; they defeat, as far as in them lies, the deſigns of Providence; and diſturb, in ſome ſort, the ſyſtem of infinite Wiſdom. The talents of theſe men denote their *general deſignation*; and the opportunities of conforming themſelves to it that ariſe in the courſe of things, or that are preſented to them by any circumſtances of rank and ſituation in the ſociety to which they belong, denote the *particular vocation* which it is not lawful for them to reſiſt, or even to neglect. Characters of this ſort are diſtinguiſhed by nature ſo eſſentially from the herd of mankind, that they ſeem to be of another ſpecies. They come into the world, or at leaſt continue in it, after the effects of ſurprize and inexperience are over, like men who are ſent on important errands: they obſerve with diſtinction; they admire with knowedge: they may indulge themſelves in pleaſure; but as their induſtry is not employed about trifles, ſo their amuſements are not made the buſineſs of their lives. If they retire

from

Halcyon Peace, on moſs reclin'd;
Retroſpect, that ſears the mind;
Rapt, earth-gazing Reverie;
Bluſhing, artleſs Modeſty;
Health, that ſnuffs the morning air;
Full-ey'd Truth, with boſom bare;
Inſpiration, Nature's child,
Seek the ſolitary wild.

The ſtate of the mind, if properly conſulted, will diſcover whether Solitude may be ſafely indulged. The boſom that, amidſt the gay delights and luxurious pleaſures of the world, feels a riſing diſcontent and uneaſineſs, may try the retreats of Solitude without danger; and if, after a certain period, an attachment to its mild and tranquil ſcenes continue, and the heart enjoys that quietude and content which it before ſo vainly wiſhed to experience, Society may be advantageouſly relinquiſhed. The patient may, under ſuch circumſtances, ſafely indulge the natural inclinations of the mind, and gratify the habitual

from the world, their ſplendor accompanies them, and enlightens even the obſcurity of their retreat. If they take a part in public life, the effect is never indifferent: they either appear like miniſters of Divine vengeance, and their courſe through the world is marked by deſolation and oppreſſion, by poverty and ſervitude; or they are the guardian angels of the country they inhabit, buſy to avert even the moſt diſtant evil, and to maintain or to procure peace, plenty, and, the greateſt of human bleſſings, LIBERTY.

habitual feelings of his heart: he may then exclaim, in the language of the poet,

"Oh! ſnatch me ſwift from thoſe tumultuous ſcenes
To lonely groves and ſweetly verdant greens,
To where Religion, Peace, and Comfort dwell,
And chear with heavenly rays the lonely cell:
To where no ruffling winds, no raging ſeas,
Diſturb the mind amidſt its penſive eaſe:
Each paſſion calm; where mild affections ſhine,
The ſoul enjoying quietude divine:
Unknown in private or in public ſtrife,
Soft ſailing down the placid ſtream of life:
Aw'd by no terrors, by no cares perplex'd,
My life, a gentle paſſage to the next."

But when that delightful tranquillity of mind, which an exceſs of ſocial pleaſures has impaired or deſtroyed, is not reſtored to its original purity by the uninterrupted quietude of ſecluſion, it may fairly be concluded, that there is ſome natural and conſtitutional defect, that defeats the remedy, and prevents the ſoul from taſting that ſerenity which is ſo eſſential to the enjoyment of human happineſs. Under ſuch circumſtances it is dangerous to indulge the pleaſures of Solitude: the ſufferer ſhould fly back to Society; cultivate the duties of active life; and ſolicit, with temperate indulgence, its more agreeable enjoyments. For although the pleaſures and occupations of the world cannot eradicate this ſpecies of intellectual

diſeaſe, they may, by being judiciouſly followed, ſuſpend its progreſs, and alleviate its pangs. That caſe muſt always be deſperate, when the antidote is too weak to reach the poiſon, or to counteract its operation. A pious reſignation to his fate can alone afford relief; and the language of ſuch a ſufferer muſt be,

"Oh! as it pleaſes thee, thou Power Supreme,
To drive my bark thro' life's more rapid ſtream,
If lowering ſtorms my deſtin'd courſe attend,
And ocean rage 'till this black voyage end,
Let ocean rage, and ſtorms indignant roar,
I bow ſubmiſſive, and reſign'd adore:
Reſign'd adore, in various changes tried;
Thy own lov'd Son my anchor and my guide:
Reſign'd adore whate'er thy will decree;
My faith in Jeſus, and my hope in Thee,
And humbly wait 'till, thro' a ſea of woes,
I reach the wiſh'd-for harbour of repoſe."

There are, however, circumſtances under which it is abſolutely neceſſary to retire from the world, in order to avoid the recurrence of ſentiments and feelings that are pregnant with unhappineſs. To a mind that feels an unconquerable diſguſt of the manners and maxims of a world which it cannot reform; to a heart that turns with horror from the various ſights the world exhibits of human woe, which he is incapable of relieving; to a boſom that is ſtung by the

the various vices which he cannot prevent or reſtrain, and which are hourly practiſed among the ſons of men, Retirement becomes an obligation which the juſtice that every good man owes to his own felicity demands. The impulſe to Solitude may in ſuch caſe be conſcientiouſly indulged, in the firmeſt confidence of its rectitude. It is a retreat neceſſary to the preſervation, not only of happineſs, but of virtue; and the world itſelf may be benefited by its effects. Removed from the ſad ſcenes of incivility, wretchedneſs, and guilt, the tender feelings of pity are regulated with compoſure; the mind views its own operations with nicer diſcrimination; the high ſenſe of virtue is rendered leſs indignant; and the hatred againſt vice more temperate and diſcerning. The violent emotions which created the diſguſting pain gently ſubſide; and as our reflections on the condition of human nature prevail, the ſoul feels how incumbent it is to endeavour to bear with the follies, to alleviate the miſeries, and to reform the vices of mankind; while the leiſure and quietude which Solitude affords, enables A MAN, who has thus retired, to point out the moſt likely means of accompliſhing the ends which his lonely meditation, and philanthropic feelings, have generouſly inſpired.

" With aſpect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him ſeated on a mount ſerene,

Above the fogs of ſenſe, and paſſion's ſtorm.
All the black cares and tumults of this life,
Like harmleſs thunder breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
Earth's genuine ſons, the ſceptre'd and the ſlave,
A mingled mob! a wandering herd! he ſees
Bewilder'd in the vale; in all unlike,
His full reverſe in all! What higher praiſe?
What ſtronger demonſtration of the right?
Himſelf too much he prizes to be proud,
And nothing thinks ſo great in man as MAN.
Too dear he holds man's intereſt to neglect
Another's welfare, or his right invade.
Wrong he ſuſtains with temper, looks on heaven,
Nor ſtoops to think his injurer his foe;
But looks with gentle pity round, to find
How he can beſt relieve another's woe,
Or huſh the vicious paſſions into peace.

Thoſe who have paſſed their lives in the domeſtic privacies of retirement; who have been only uſed to the ſoft and gentle offices of FRIENDSHIP, and to the tender endearments of LOVE; who have formed their notion of VIRTUE from thoſe bright images which the purity of RELIGION, the perfection of MORAL SENTIMENTS, and the feelings of an affectionate heart, have planted in their minds, are too apt to yield to the abhorrence and diſguſt they muſt unavoidably feel on a firſt view of the artificial manners and unbluſhing vices of the world. Iſſuing from the calm retreats of ſimplicity and innocence, and fondly

fondly hoping to meet with more enlarged perfection in the world, their amiable, juſt, and benevolent diſpoſitions are ſhocked at the ſour ſeverities, the ſordid ſelfiſhneſs, the groſs injuſtice, the baſe artifices, and the inhuman cruelties, which deform the faireſt features of ſocial life, and diſgrace the beſt framed fabric of human polity. Revolting, however, as this diſappointment muſt certainly be, and grievouſly as the feelings of ſuch characters muſt be wounded on their entering the world, it is a cowardly deſertion of their duty to ſhrink from the taſk, and withdraw their ſervices from their fellow creatures. Conſtituted as ſociety is, human happineſs, and the improvement of the ſpecies, materially depends upon the active concurrence of every individual in the general ſcheme of nature; and the man who withholds his aſſiſtance to promote the public good, looſens or deſtroys a link in that chain of things by which the whole is intended to be kept together and preſerved. The doctrine, therefore, cannot be too forcibly inculcated, that it is indiſpenſibly incumbent on every individual ſo to accommodate himſelf to the manners of his contemporaries, and the temper of the times, that he may have an opportunity of promoting the happineſs of others while he encreaſes his own; of extending the ſcale of human knowledge by his

ſocial

ſocial induſtry; of relieving diſtreſs by his bounty; and of exhibiting the deformities of VICE, and the beauties of VIRTUE, both by his precepts and example. And this ſacred obligation, by which every good man feels himſelf ſo firmly bound to promote the welfare and happineſs of his fellow creatures, of courſe enjoins him to ſhun, with equal perſeverance, the giddy multitude in their purſuits of lawleſs pleaſure, and to avoid the thoughtleſs votaries, and baneful orgies, of wit, intemperance, and ſenſual debauchery. This is beſt effected by every individual forming a rational ſcheme of domeſtic enjoyment, and engaging in ſome uſeful occupation, in which neither the frivolous purſuits of the vainly buſy, the oſtentatious parade of the richly proud, the faithleſs pleaſures of the unthinking gay, the inſatiable anxieties of avarice, nor the diſtracting compunctions of vice, ſhall form any part; but in which, with a few amiable and faithful friends, he ſhall paſs the intervals of virtuous induſtry, or charitable exertion, in the boſom of a fond and cheerful family, whoſe mutual endearments and affections will confer on each other the higheſt happineſs human nature is capable of enjoying.

Active in indolence, abroad who roam
In queſt of HAPPINESS which dwells at HOME,
With vain purſuits fatigu'd, at length will find
Its real dwelling is a virtuous mind.

RETIREMENT,

RETIREMENT, however, when it is not inconſiſtent with our duties to Society, or injurious to thoſe family intereſts which it is one of our principal foundations of happineſs to promote, is capable of producing the moſt beneficial effects on our minds. The ſelf-communion which muſt accompany a wiſe and rational Solitude, not only foſters and confirms our virtuous inclinations, but detects and expells thoſe latent vices which have ſecretly crept into and corrupted the heart. It induces a habit of contemplation, which invigorates the faculties of the ſoul; raiſes them to the higheſt energies, and directs them to purpoſes more elevated and noble than it was poſſible for them amidſt the buſineſs and pleaſures of public life to attain. It tends, indeed, to unfold the powers of the mind to ſo great an extent, that we are aſhamed of having thought that our talents were confined within the limits we had preſcribed, and bluſh at the ignorance and cowardice by which we were deceived. The activity of genius is unlimited, and the meaſure of its effects depends entirely upon a ſteady exertion of its powers. A courageous and perſevering induſtry is capable of ſurmounting every difficulty, and of performing the higheſt atchievements. A ſenſe of intellectual weakneſs, ſo far from being indulged, ought to be combated with fortitude and reſolution,

tion, until it is compleatly deſtroyed. The human mind, like a noble tree, extends its branches widely round, and raiſes them to the ſkies, in proportion as the ſoil on which it grows is more or leſs cultivated and manured; but not being fixed to any certain ſpot, its growth may be improved to any ſize, by tranſplanting it to the ſoil in which it moſt delights to dwell. By that firm reliance on its natural ſtrength, that indefatigable exertion of its improved powers, that ſteady obſervance of its ſucceſsful operations, and that warm and active zeal for excellence to which it is invited by the advantages, and encouraged by the opportunities, which ſecluſion affords, it will aſcend from one ſtage of improvement to another, from acquiſition to acquiſition; and, by a gradual and ſteady progreſs, reach a comprehenſive elevation, as great and ſurprizing as it was once thought viſionary and unattainable. To theſe ſublime and noble efforts of human intellect, SOLITUDE is the ſincereſt guide and moſt powerful auxiliary; and he who aſpires to mental and moral excellence, whoſe ſoul is anxious to become both GREAT and GOOD, will of courſe ſeek its inſpiring ſhades.

SOLITUDE, indeed, under any circumſtances, can only become injurious by being carried to exceſs, or by being miſapplied: And what is there that

that will not, by being abuſed or miſapplied, be rendered equally injurious? The higheſt advantages Society is capable of conferring, the loftieſt flights of fancy, the beſt affections of the heart, the greateſt ſtrength of body, the happieſt activity of mind, the elements of fire and water, the bleſſings of liberty, and, in ſhort, all the excellent gifts of Providence, as well as all the ingenious contrivances of man, may, by theſe means, be perverted, their uſes deſtroyed, their ends and objects defeated, and their operations and effects rendered extenſively miſchievous and detrimental.

The general advantages which SOLITUDE is certainly capable of producing, cannot be leſſened by conceding to its adverſaries, that it is, when ſought under unfavourable circumſtances, inauſpicious to human happineſs. It would be overſtepping the ſacred boundaries of TRUTH, and violating the rights of CANDOUR, not to admit that IRRATIONAL SOLITUDE frequently overclouds the reaſon, contracts the underſtanding, vitiates the manners, inflames the paſſions, corrupts the imagination, ſours the temper, and debaſes the whole character of its votaries. Nor is it neceſſary to deny that many of them, inſtead of employing the delightful leiſure which Retirement affords, to huſh the jarring paſſions, to chaſtiſe the fancy, to elevate and adorn the mind,

and

and to reform and ameliorate the heart, have been too often occupied in the moſt frivolous purſuits, and in the indulgence of the moſt ſordid and criminal deſires. But theſe inſtances in which the pure and peaceful retreats of Solitude have been tainted and diſturbed by the vicious and turbulent deſires of the world, only demonſtrate the infirm, corrupt, and imperfect nature of the ſpecies, and do not in the ſmalleſt degree depreciate the value of thoſe high advantages which reſult from occaſional and well regulated SOLITUDE.

It is ſaid by a celebrated German writer, in a poetical perſonification of SOLITUDE, that ſhe holds in one hand a cup of bliſs, in which ſhe preſents unceaſing ſweets to the lips of the happy; and in the other graſps an envenomed dagger, which ſhe plants with increaſing tortures in the boſom of the wretched: but this muſt be conſidered as the language of the muſe, and a mere flight of poetic fancy; except, indeed, ſo far as it tends to enforce the idea, that VIRTUE will always be happy, and VICE for ever miſerable; for Retirement, while it pours the balm of comfort into the aching boſom of the unfortunate, and offers a cordial cheering as nectar to the drooping ſpirits of the WISE and VIRTUOUS,

only

only operates as a corroſive, agonizing poiſon on the conſtitutions of the WEAK and VICIOUS.

It is a groſs miſtake to ſuppoſe that the pleaſures of ſocial life are incompatible with the benefits to be derived from Solitude. They may not only be intermingled with, but made mutually to aid and augment each other. SOLITUDE may ſurely be enjoyed without undergoing an exile from the world; and SOCIETY may be freely mixed with, without abſolutely renouncing the pleaſures of Retirement. The circumſtances of life, indeed, call loudly on every mind to interchange the purſuits of activity with ſcenes of quietude and repoſe. The alliance of Solitude and Society is neceſſary to the perfection not only of the intellectual character, but to the corporeal conſtitution of man. To conclude that the duties of life muſt neceſſarily be neglected by devoting a portion of our time to Solitude, is much more erroneous than to conclude that thoſe duties are not always fulfilled amidſt the pleaſures or buſineſs of Society.

Daily obſervation proves moſt clearly, that many of the charms, and ſome of the benefits, of rural retreat, may be enjoyed without retiring to any very conſiderable diſtance from the metropolis, the ſeat of ſocial joys and intereſted

tereſted activity. PETRARCH, during his reſidence in the city of *Parma*, though extremely flattered by the friendſhip ſhewn him, was glad to ſteal from public life as often as he could, and to indulge the high delight he naturally felt in wandering through the fields and woods, which ſurrounded the metropolis. One day, led by his love of exerciſe, he paſſed the river of *Lenza*, which is three miles from *Parma*, and found himſelf in the territory of *Rhegio*, in a great foreſt, which is called *Silva Piana*, or Low Wood; though it is ſituated upon a hill, from whence are diſcovered THE ALPS and all CISALPINE GAUL. Aged oaks, whoſe heads ſeemed to touch the clouds, ſheltered the avenues of the foreſt from the rays of the ſun; while the freſh breezes, which deſcended from the neighbouring mountains, and the little rivulets which brawled along its ſkirts, tempered the meridian heats of the day, and preſerved to the earth, even in the greateſt droughts, a ſoft verdure, enamelled with the fineſt flowers. Birds of every kind warbled forth their rural ſongs from the thick coverts, while deer, and every animal of the chace, ſported through the purlieus. In the middle of this beautiful foreſt nature had formed a romantic theatre, which, from its enchanting decorations, ſhe ſeemed to have deſigned for the reſidence of the Muſes. The charms of this delightful retreat ſtruck the mind

mind of PETRARCH with a ſort of inſpiration, and revived ſo ſtrongly his original taſte for Solitude, that, on his return to *Parma*, he endeavoured to procure ſome ſpot near the environs of the city, to which he might occaſionally retire from the fatigues of his archdeaconry, and indulge his mind in the bleſſings of innocence, and the delights of rural repoſe. The induſtry of his enquiries ſoon furniſhed him with a ſmall cottage, exactly ſuited to his wiſhes, ſituated at the end of the city, near the abbey of *St. Anthony*. To this place he fondly and frequently retired, whenever he could eſcape from the duties of his church, and the invitations of his friends. The ſuperiority of his talents had at this time attracted the attention and applauſe of mankind; and his engaging manners ſecured to him the reſpect and eſteem of the nobles of *Parma*, who beſieged him with the moſt friendly and flattering importunities to partake of their daily parties of pleaſure. PETRARCH, however, had formed notions of happineſs very foreign to thoſe which reſult from the ſociety of luxurious lords or faſhionable females, to whom, in general, poetry afforded no delight, nor philoſophy inſtruction; and the companions to whom he could afford neither amuſement or information, were not likely to afford him much ſatisfaction. The quiet and ſimple pleaſures of Retirement were more delightful to his mind than

than all the elegancies and ſplendors of *Parma*: but this partiality to Retirement did not induce him to renounce the rational ſociety which a few ſelect friends, with whom he had cloſely connected himſelf, was occaſionally capable of affording him. "So conveniently," ſays he, "is "this delightful cottage ſituated, that I enjoy "all the advantages of rural retirement, and "and yet retain within my reach all the plea-"ſures with which this gay and elegant city "abounds. The ſociety of a few ſelect friends "recreates my mind whenever it is diſtracted "by the anxieties of ſtudy, or ſtagnated by the "ſtillneſs of Solitude; and when I am ſatiated "with the pleaſures of the town, I fly with "rapture to the ſweet repoſe, and to all the "intereſting and endearing occupations of this "charming retreat. Oh! may the kindneſs of "Fortune long indulge me in the enjoyment of "this neutral ſtate; this happy alternation of "rural tranquillity and convivial ſolace; a ſtate "of felicity to which neither the anchorites of "Egypt, nor the philoſophers of Greece, ever "attained. In this humble abode let me quiet-"ly paſs the remainder of my days, unſe-"duced by the charms of greatneſs, and unin-"terrupted by the pleaſures of the world. Fly, "all ye vain deluſions, and fantaſtic dreams, "from this cottage of content, and ſeek,

"your

" your native territories, the palaces of princes, " and the altars of ambition!" The voice of WISDOM and VIRTUE calls aloud on every man to adopt the ſcheme of happineſs which PETRARCH ſo ſucceſsfully practiſed. By thus dividing our time between the buſy cares and innocent amuſements of public life, and the ſtudious and tranquil pleaſures of Retirement, between the gay purſuits of perſonal gratifications, and the more noble and elevated exerciſes of intellect, we may avoid the dangers of contracting on the one hand a paſſion for light and frivolous diſſipation, and on the other, a joyleſs diſpoſition to miſanthropic ſeverity; and may ſhun moſt, if not all, of the evil conſequences which either SOLITUDE or SOCIETY is capable of producing, which, when indulged irrationally or indiſcreetly, in general prove the SCYLLA or CHARYBDIS of our lives.

Theſe are the obſervations which it has occurred to me to make upon the Advantages and Diſadvantages with which theſe important means of human happineſs are reſpectively pregnant. I can truly ſay, that I have felt, whenever the cares of life, and duties of my profeſſion, have allowed me leiſure to retire, the moſt ſublime and ſatisfactory enjoyment from SOLITUDE; and I ſincerely wiſh that every one who is diſpoſed to taſte

taſte it, may receive the ſame comfort and pleaſure from its charms. But I exhort them, while they enjoy the ſacred bleſſings of repoſe, not to neglect the SOCIAL VIRTUES, the conſolations of FRIENDSHIP, or the endearments of LOVE; but ſo manage the wants of nature, and arrange the buſineſs and concerns of life, as to find an adequate portion of leiſure for the noble duties of Retirement, as well as for the company and converſation of the world. May they, in ſhort, enjoy the admiration and eſteem of their friends, and a complacent approbation of their own conduct, without loſing that reliſh for the pleaſures of rational Retirement, by which alone theſe high advantages are moſt likely to be gained.

To love all mankind, and to promote, to the utmoſt of our power, the happineſs of all thoſe with whom we are more intimately connected, is the higheſt injunction both of morality and religion. But this important duty certainly does not require that we ſhould ſurrender ourſelves with ſervile obedience, or abject ſubmiſſion, to any one, however ſuperior he may be either in talents, in ſtation, or in merit. On the contrary, it is the duty of every one not only to cultivate the inclination, but to reſerve the power of retiring occaſionally from the world, without indulging

indulging a diſpoſition to renounce its ſociety or contemn its manners. While we aſſert, with manly reſolution, the independent ſpirit of human nature, our HAPPINESS may be conſiderably augmented, by extracting from the multitudinous affairs of the world, the various enjoyments and wiſe inſtructions it is capable of affording. SOCIETY is the ſchool of WISDOM, and SOLITUDE the temple of VIRTUE. In the one we learn the art of living with comfort among our fellow creatures, and in the other, of living with quietude by ourſelves. A total retreat from the world would lay us aſide from that part which Providence chiefly intended us to act; but without occaſional retreat, it is certain that we muſt act that part very ill. There will be neither conſiſtency in the conduct, nor dignity in the character, of one who ſets apart no ſhare of his time for meditation and reflection. "In the heat and buſtle of life," ſays an eloquent preacher, "while paſſion is every moment throwing falſe colours on the objects around us, nothing can be viewed in a juſt light. If you wiſh that reaſon ſhould exert her native power, you muſt ſtep aſide from the crowd into the cool and ſilent ſhade. It is thus that with ſober and ſteady eye ſhe examines what is good or ill, what is wiſe or fooliſh, in human conduct: ſhe looks back on the paſt; ſhe looks forward to the future; and forms plans not

for the preſent moment only, but for the whole life. How ſhould that man diſcharge any part of his duty aright, who never ſuffers his paſſions to cool? and how ſhould his paſſions cool, who is engaged, without interruption, in the tumults of the world? This inceſſant ſtir may be called *the perpetual drunkenneſs of life.* It raiſes that eager fermentation of ſpirit, which will be ever ſending forth the dangerous fumes of raſhneſs and folly. Whereas he who mingles RATIONAL RETREAT with WORLDLY AFFAIRS, remains calm, and maſter of himſelf. He is not whirled round, and rendered giddy by the agitation of the world; but from that SACRED RETIREMENT in which he has been converſant among higher objects, comes forth into the world with manly tranquillity, fortified by principles which he has formed, and prepared for whatever may befal."

Sweet SOLITUDE! when life's gay hours are paſt,
Howe'er we range, in thee we fix at laſt.
Toſs'd through tempeſtuous ſeas, the voyage o'er,
Pale we look back, and bleſs thy friendly ſhore.
Our own ſtrict judges, our paſt life we ſcan,
And aſk if glory hath enlarg'd the ſpan:
If bright the proſpect, we the grave defy,
Truſt future ages, and contented die.

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FINIS.

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